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THE ORIGIN
OF
THE ENGLISH DRAMA,

ILLUSTRATED IN ITS VARIOUS SPECIES,

VIZ.

MYSTERY, MORALITY, TRAGEDY,
AND COMEDY,

BY SPECIMENS FROM OUR EARLIEST WRITERS;

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES
BY THOMAS HAWKINS, M.A.,
OF MAGDALENE COLLEGE, OXFORD,

VOLUME THE FIRST.

— *Res antiquæ laudis et artis*
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes.

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The P R E F A C E.

IT is by no means necessary here to enter into a Dispute, which has already engaged the pen of many able writers, concerning the ORIGIN of the MODERN DRAMA in Europe; for, whether it arose in France or in Italy, among the Troubadors of Provence or the Shepherds of Calabria; or started up nearly at the same time in different kingdoms; it will be sufficient for our purpose to contend, that it was a Distinct Species of itself, and not a Revival of the ANCIENT DRAMA, with which it cannot be compared and must never be confounded. If this point be clearly proved, we shall place our admirable SHAKESPEARE beyond the reach of Criticism; by considering him as the poet, who brought the drama of the Moderns to its highest perfection; and by dispensing with his obedience to the RULES of the ANCIENTS, which probably he did not know, but certainly did not mean to follow.

There is nothing, indeed, more superfluous than our inquiries into the Origin of great and useful Inventions, nor more vain than the contests between rival nations, concerning the honour of having given birth to the first Inventor of an art or science; since it is certain, that two persons, living at the extremities of the habitable globe, must often make the same discoveries in a science or an art, without the smallest communication with each other: Thus the Works of Confucius were printed in China, many ages before the Art of Printing was introduced

duced into Europe*; and a combustible Powder was used in the same part of Asia, before the vast explosion of Nitre and Sulphur was mentioned by our Friar Bacon, who flourished long before another Benedictine invented a composition so destructive of true valour. Even the finer arts are more natural to man than we are apt to imagine: the sound of the wind breathing among the reeds suggested the Invention of a Flute to the first inhabitants of very distant regions; and as to Vocal Music, the Sister or rather Handmaid of Poetry, we find, that the inhabitants of Iceland, the very dwarfs of Lapland, and even the wild natives of America, have their Songs and Elegies, which they could not have learned from any other nation.†

IMITATION is not less natural to mankind than the Passions; and if these were the sources of Poetry in general, the former gave rise to Dramatic Representations in all ages. It is natural for indolent persons, who have no resources in their arts or learning against the tediousness of life, to delight in assuming fictitious characters; as we see the Children at school fond of playing at Kings or Heroes;

— *Pueri ludunt, Rex tris, nunt;*

and of acting extempore the stories, which strike them most in their books of study or amusement. The Chinese, we find, had a regular Stage, on which they represented the most interesting events of their history, before they had any intercourse with Europeans. The Russians had a kind of rude Drama at the close of the last century, when they were less civilized than the Tartars; but now they have learned of the French to write Tragedies in

* See Du Halde's Account of China.

† See Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, 8vo. and Northern Antiquities, 2 vol. 8vo. Scheffer's Hist. of Lapland. Lâstau, Mœurs de Sauvages, &c.

rhyme,

rhyme, and to preserve the Unities*. We are told by sir John Chardin, that even in Persia and India, where theatrical diversions are inconsistent with the religion of Mahomet, there are Minstrels and Dancers, who ramble from city to city, and represent the stories of the east by their singing or gestures. †

In ancient Greece the first plays began with Hymns to the praise of Bacchus, to which was afterwards added a kind of Dialogue, representing some exploit or adventure of that deity: and, indeed, in all nations the first Players would naturally chuse a subject taken from the popular Religion, as being most obvious and familiar to the minds of their auditors, most generally interesting, and therefore most likely to engage their attention.

It is believed by many learned writers, ‡ that the ancient Eleusinian Mysteries were a kind of sacred Drama, exhibited at stated seasons with great variety of shows, and solemn machinery. The Hierophantes, or high-priest of Ceres, addressed the initiated in a sort of awful prologue, and invited them "to begin a New Life," as the word INITIATION seems to imply. The first scene represented this Life in a dark valley, in which a number of persons were wandering at random, and conducted by some glimmering of reason; after which Elysium and Tartarus, with a view of future rewards and punishments, were displayed with all imaginable solemnity: and the

* There is a Russian tragedy in five acts by Michael Lomonosoff, entitled DEMOPHONTE, which seems to contain some pathetic scenes. — Samarokoff wrote about fifteen years since four or five tragedies, which are highly applauded by his countrymen, and have been translated into French: the most celebrated of them is SINOFF AND TROOVER, two brothers.

† We are informed that our late Voyagers to the South Seas found a species of Dramatic Entertainment in their new discovered Island of OTAKEITE, which no one will suspect to have been borrowed from any other nation, cut off as this people have been for innumerable ages from all other inhabitants of the globe.

‡ See the DIVINE LEGATION, &c.

whole was contrived, as we may collect from ancient authors, to inculcate, by a sensible representation, that great truth of the **UNITY OF GOD**; which Plato, and the heathen Philosophers, not daring to declare it openly to the vulgar, were obliged to express in **Mysterious Discourses**, and dark **Allegories**. Even some of the inspired writings have been considered by very pious authors as of the dramatic kind: Thus the illustrious Bossuet divides the **SONG OF SOLOMON** into various scenes. The **Book of JOB**, equally valuable for its great antiquity, and for the noble strain of moral poetry, in which it is composed, has been esteemed a regular drama; and Milton tells us, that a learned Critic distributed the **AROCALYPS** into several Acts, distinguished by a Chorus of Angels.

In the decline of the Greek empire, Gregory of Nazianzum, a poet and father of the church, persuaded the people of Byzantium to represent on their theatre some chosen stories of the Old and New Testament, and to banish from their stage the profane compositions of Sophocles and Euripides. For this purpose he supplied them with Sacred Dramas †, which had not the success of **OEDIPUS** and **ELECTRA**, since most of them were lost at the revival of learning, while the inestimable remains of the ancient tragedies were preserved with the greatest care. But the poems of Gregory, as well as the language of the Greeks, were wholly unknown to the Italians of that age, who can hardly be thought to have borrowed their **MYSTERIES** from Constantinople.

† **GREGORY** himself wrote a tragedy, entitled **CHRIST'S PASSION**, a subject that had before been handled by Apollinarius of Laodicea, bishop of Hierapolis. The Tragedy so called, by George Sandys, Esq. 4to. 1640. was originally designed, as he informs the reader, by the curious pen of Groſſius, though it is by no means a servile translation, is written in smooth rhyme, and was deservedly applauded by the wits of his age. The celebrated lord Falkland addressed an elegant copy of verses to the author, which is prefixed to the first edition.

A custom

P R E F A C E.

A custom of representing some event recorded in scripture at every solemn Festival became almost general, nearly at the same period, in the south, the west, and even in the north of Europe. The Jews themselves had the Stories of the old Testament exhibited in the dramatic form: part of a Jewish piece, on the subject of **EXODUS**, is preserved in Greek Iambics, written by one **EZEKIEL**, who styles himself the Poet of the Hebrews. *

These scriptural pieces were called **MYSTERIES**; and no other species of the drama was known at Rome and Florence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Passion of our Saviour was performed in the Coliseum, and if the language of the Italians had been then as polished, as it was strong and copious, if their Music had been as perfect as it is at present, if the Poetry of so awful a piece had been composed by a Metastasio, and the Choral Part by a Pergolesi, such a performance must have had a wonderful effect, in a country, where, to this day, is is not thought impious, to represent the several Persons of the Trinity, and the most awful Mysteries of our Redemption. In a more polished age we have seen the subjects of Scripture delivered in a dramatic form by Milton, Racine, and by Metastasio in his **GIUSEPPE**: our great poet had even begun a tragedy on the **FALL OF MAN**; and **PARADISE LOST** owed, perhaps, its existence to an idea, which Milton conceived from a **MYSTERY** of **ANDREINO**: every one knows, that his intended drama was to have begun with the Address to the Sun in the fourth book of his divine poem.

The **MYSTERIES** continued in Italy, long after the revival of literature; for the art of Sophocles was known to the learned only, and it was necessary to gratify the

* The principal Characters of this drama are, **MOSES**, **SEPPHORA**, and **Ἰϋϋ; ἀπὸ βάρυ**, "God speaking from the bush." **MOSES** delivers the prologue in a speech of sixty lines, and his rod is changed into a serpent upon the stage.

people with subjects adapted to their capacity. One would scarce have believed, that, when Tasso had written his *AMINTA*, and furnished the noblest hints for tragedy in his *GIERUSALEMME*, the most ridiculous Farces should still be exhibited at Milan; and that, when Guarini, had introduced a Chorus of Shepherds in his *PASTOR FIDO*, the people of Italy should still be fond of seeing the Seven Deadly Sins dance a saraband with the Evil Spirit: But Maffei was not then living, and few of his countrymen in that age were capable of writing *MEROPE*.

There existed then in Europe, at the opening of the sixteenth century, two distinct species of Drama; the one formed upon the ancient CLASSIC model, and confined like the sacred dialect of the Ægyptian priests, to men of learning; the other, merely popular, and of a GOTHIC original, but capable of great improvement. In the same manner there prevailed sometime afterwards two kinds of Epic Poetry; the first, like the *LUSIAD*, on the plan of Virgil and the ancients; the second, like *ORLANDO FURIOSO* and *THE FAIRY QUEEN*, of a very different nature, but more diffuse, more various, and, perhaps, more agreeable. This distinction will place the works of Spenser and Shakespeare in their true class, and prevent a great deal of idle criticism. "Confound not predicaments," says lord Bacon, "for they are the mere-stones of reason."

The following collection opens with one of these Mysteries, on the *SLAUGHTER* of the *INNOCENTS*, given from a very old MS. of *IHAN PARFRE*, written in 1512. In the preceding year, as we learn from the Prologue to this piece, the players had represented the *APPEARANCE OF THE ANGELS TO THE SHEPHERDS*, and the *ADORATION OF THE EASTERN SAGES*, a subject very susceptible of poetical ornament; and the writer promises to entertain the public, in the next year, with the *DISPUTATION AMONG THE DOCTORS*: but we do not find, that either of these pieces has been preserved.

In

In this rude play, the Hebrew Soldiers swear by MA, sound, or Mahomet, who was not born till six hundred years after: Herod's Messenger is named WATKIN; and the Knights are directed "to walk about the Stage," while "Mary and the Infant are conveyed into Egypt." Yet, notwithstanding these absurdities, there is some kind of spirit in the character of HEROD; and the Author (one can hardly say, the Poet,) seems to have distinguished his speeches by a peculiar elevation of language:

Above all kinges under the cloudys christal
Royally I reigne, in welthe without woe.

In these lines the reader will observe a specimen of the Alliterative Metre invented by the northern bards, and used in their Runic verses; and which was so favourite an ornament with many of our English poets*. This art of distinguishing the characters of the drama, so essential to that species of poem, has been little understood by much finer writers than Parfse, and seems to be perpetually neglected by the French Tragedians themselves, with all their boasted elegance.†

One of the first improvements on the old MYSTERY was the Allegorical Play, or MORALITY, in which the Virtues and Vices were introduced as Persons of the Drama, for the purpose of instilling moral truth, or in-

* See the Essay on the Alliterative Metre of PIERCE PLOWMAN in the 2d vol. of the RELIQUES of Ant. Eng. Poetry, book III.

† The most considerable MYSTERY, or, rather, Collection of Mysteries, is in the Cotton MS. Vesp. D. viii. It is entitled in the Catalogue Ludus Coventrie; upon what authority does not appear: but from a passage in the FOUR Ps. (Dod. old plays, vol. i. p. 112.) it is clear, the COVENTRY MYSTERIES were famous. The PARDONER says,

This devyl and I were of olde acquaintance;
For oft in the Play of Corpus Christi
He hath play'd the Devil at COVENTRY.

It contains Forty distinct Pageants.

The CHURCH Whitfun-Plays are likewise very voluminous. (MS. Harl. 2023.) They are said to have been first composed in 1328. There is a particular account of them in the Harleian Catalogue.

culcating

culcating some useful lesson for the conduct of life. The Editor of the following work has preserved Three Specimens of this kind, the most ancient, and the best which could be procured : an account of their Dates and Subjects is prefixed to each of them ; and it will be sufficient in this place to observe, that, allowing for the rudeness of the diction there is some degree of merit in each of these Pieces, which might have been played to great advantage in a more polished style. In the FIRST, "A Man" "at the point of death, deserted by those on whom he" "chiefly relied for assistance, is supported only by the" "consciousness, of his good actions:" In the SECOND, "A travelled Man, who affects to laugh at virtue and" "religion, and thinks the knowledge of mankind to consist in vice and profligacy, is exposed and confuted" "by Pity, Contemplation, and Perseverance:" And in the THIRD, called the Interlude of Lusty Juventus, and written in the reign of Edward VI. are displayed "The" "follies and weakness of a Young Man of pleasure, who" "is reformed by prudent counsellors, and led at last to" "virtue." The two Songs, with which this Interlude begins and closes, are very lively and elegant for that age.

These moral plays having for their end to divert, as well as to instruct the populace, were for the most part of a comic turn, and therefore naturally led the way for COMEDY : which it should seem was introduced into our language before TRAGEDY. The first dramatic piece which appeared with that classic name, was produced as might be expected in one of our universities; this was GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE written in 1551, and said in the old title-pages to be "made by Mr. S. master of" "arts and played on the stage—in Christ's college in" "Cambridge." There is a vein of familiar humour in this play and a kind of grotesque imagery, not unlike some parts of Aristophanes, but without those graces of language and meter, for which the Greek comedian was eminently distinguished.

The

The prevailing-turn for drollery and comic humour was at first so strong, that in order to gratify it even in more serious and solemn scenes it was necessary still to retain the VICE or artful Buffoon, who (like his contemporary the privileged FOOL in the courts of princes and castles of the great men) was to enter into the most stately assemblies and vent his humour without restraint. We have a specimen of this character in the play of CAMBYSES (pag. 261.) where Ambidexter, who is expressly called the VICE, enters "with an old capcase for "a helmet and a skimmer for his sword," in order, as the author expresses it, "to make pastime."*

Soon after Comedy, the ancient TRAGEDY began likewise to be revived, but it was only among the more refined Scholars that at first it retained much resemblance of the Classical Form: for the more popular audiences it was debased with an intermixture of low gross humour, which has long continued under the name of TRAGI-COMEDY. Even where a series of grave solemn scenes was exhibited without much interruption of buffoonery or farce, still our Poets were content to imitate the old MYSTERIES in giving only a tissue of interesting events simply as they happened, without any artful conduct of the fable, and without the least regard to the three great unities: these they called HISTORIES †, and these would probably have long continued the only specimens of our heroic Drama, if a few persons of superior education and more refined taste had not formed their scenes upon the classic models, and introduced legitimate Tragedy in the ancient form. But these at first were only composed

* Shakespeare's CROWNS are genuine successors of the old VICE: And, as the late learned editor of that poet has well observed, PUNCH still exhibits the intire character.

† See a very curious account of these peculiar productions of the English theatre, in the 2d vol. of Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poetry. (2d edit.) p. 135, 136. Which vindicates our great poet Shakespeare, for his neglect of the unities, from the impertinence of criticism, and places many of his best productions in a new, but just light.

for private and learned audiences, at the inns of court, O the universities. It was for a grand christmas solemnity at the Inner Temple in 1561, that the tragedy of **PERREX AND PORREX** was composed by **THOMAS SACKVILLE** (afterwards lord Buckhurst) and **THOMAS NORTON**.

This Play is not wholly void of blemishes; but the language of it is in general elegant, perspicuous and full of dignity: The speeches of the three Counsellors in the first act are noble and genuine specimens of English eloquence, and the account of Porrex's Death by Marcella is very much in the manner of the ancients. There are few narrations of Euripides, not excepting even that in the **ALCESTES**, which are superior to it in tenderness and simplicity. Notwithstanding it's defects, which are pointed out by sir Philip Sidney *, it was a model, which our first dramatic writers would have done well to follow. But they aiming no higher than at present applause and present profit, were content to comply with every tasteless desire of a rude and ignorant audience, and the Common Theatres continued to exhibit Dramatic Pieces chiefly, if not altogether, of the Gothic Form, very much unlike the chaste and perfect models of Antiquity.

About the year 1589, **THE SPANISH TRAGEDY** † was written by **Kyd**, to whom Ben Jonson gives the epithet of **SPORTING**; and **SOLIMAN AND PERSEDA** seems to have been composed by the same author. There are many faults in both these pieces; but though they are not entirely free from affectation and pedantry, yet a fine spirit seems to run through them: The character of **BASILISCO**

* See the introduction prefixed to this play.

† It may be proper here to correct a mistake, which has been committed in the short introductory Account of the **SPANISH TRAGEDY**: (Vol. II.) Langbaine's assertion that there were Two Plays on this subject, is there contradicted. But the editor hath since seen the former Play, or First Part of **IRONIMO**, of which that printed in these volumes is the Second Part or Sequel, hence it's title of "**IRONIMO IS MAD AGAIN**:" is is however sufficiently independent; and the reader will have no great reason to regret the omission of the former play on this subject.

is very well supported, and if Kyd's play was acted before Shakespeare's *HENRY IV.* (for they were both printed the same year 1599) it should seem to be the original of *FALSTAFF*. These tragedies are written in blank verse, intermixed with some passages in rhyme; where we sometimes find a smooth couplet not unworthy of Dryden; as,

Where bloodly furies shake their whips of steel,
And poor Ixion turns an endless wheel.

About the close of the sixteenth century a sacred subject was again delivered in the dramatic form, and the story of *DAVID AND ABSALOM* was wrought into a tragedy by *GEORGE PERLE*, a very ingenious writer and a flowery poet. This piece abounds in luxuriant descriptions, and fine imagery; and his genius seems to have been kindled by reading the Prophets and the Song of Solomon. He calls Lightning, by a metaphor worthy of *Æschylus*, "the spouse of Thunder, with bright and fiery wings." His description of David will be admired as soon as read:

Beauteous and bright he is among the tribes;
As when the sun, attir'd in glittering robe,
Comes dancing from his oriental gate,
And bridegroom-like hurls thro' the gloomy air
His radiant beams——

There are many other passages in this play, of which Milton would not have been ashamed, and which, perhaps, he had read with pleasure; especially the Prologue, which is the regular exordium of an epic poem.

We come now to the Third Volume, which contains four of our earliest *COMEDIES*; and here the reader will naturally wonder, why no pieces of this kind are inserted from 1551, when our first regular Comedy was performed, to 1566, when the Translation from the Italian was represented at Gray's-Inn. This omission proceeded from the editor's not having been able to meet with a sufficient supply

supply of intermediate comedies; though many doubtless were composed in that interval *, which were appropriated to particular theatres, and preserved in manuscript, lest they should be exhibited in other houses.

. COMEDY, after the revival of letters, seems to have been first encouraged and improved by the Italians, whose fondness for Dramatic Poetry increased so much, that, under Leo, X. the principal cities of Italy began to vie with each other in the magnificence of their Theatres: men of the first eminence in the Roman Church were ambitious of reviving the Drama in their native idioms. Even to write a Comedy, was not thought below the dignity of the purple; and a comic piece of cardinal Bibiena was represented with wonderful success.

At last Ariosto rose, whose ORLANDO FURIOSO still passes among his countrymen for a rich mine of elegant and agreeable poetry. He is, perhaps, the only Epic Poet, who ever condescended to write Familiar Comedies; but we may see by his ORLANDO, that his genius had a singular bent to wit and ridicule: his heroes are full of merriment in the midst of danger, and he seldom describes a battle without a jest. His comedies are highly esteemed in Italy to this day, though the popular

* Sir John Harrington, in his Apology for Poetry prefixed to his translation of Orlando Furioso, having given the highest encomiums on Tragedy in general, and particularly on that of RICHARD III. proceeds, — “Then for Comedies, how full of harmless mirth is our Cambridge PRUDENTIUS? and the Oxford BELLUM GRAMMATICALE? or, to speak of a London comedy how much good matter of state is there in that Comedy called, THE PLAY OF THE CARDS? In which it showed how Four Parasitical Knaves robbe the Four Principal Vocations of the realme, videl. The vocation of Souldiers, Schollers, Marchants, and Husbandmen. Of which comedy I cannot forget the saying of a notable and wise counsellor that is now dead [SIR FRANCIS WALSHINGHAM] who, when some, (to sing *Placebo*) advised that it should be forbidden because it was somewhat too plain, and indeed, as the old saying is (SOOTH BOORD IS NO BOORD †,) yet he would have it allowed, adding it was fit that. “That they that do that they should not, should heare what they would not.”

† i. e. True joke is no joke.

dialect,

dialect, and sprightliness of Goldoni may, perhaps, be more adapted to the taste of the vulgar. His *SUPPOSITI* was translated by GASCOIGNE, (who was himself no inelegant poet) and it is now reprinted in the collection here offered to the public. The reader will immediately observe, that part of the story is the same with that of Lucentio and Bianca in *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*; but it is not demonstrably certain, that Shakespeare borrowed his plot from Gascoigne, as Mr. FARMER conjectures*, since he alters most of the names, and changes Sienna and Ferrara into Pisa and Padua, Philogano into Vincentio, and Dulippo into Tranio: it is more probable, that he found the whole story, together with that of Catherine and Petruchio, in some book of novels translated from the Italian.

THE UNTRUSSING OF THE HUMOROUS POET is a satire upon BEN JONSON, who had given the author a very just provocation in his *POETASTER*, where he ridicules DEKKER by the name of CRISPINUS. It may be no unpleasing amusement to the reader, to compare the two productions of these rival poets: there is certainly a great deal of wit in both of them; and, perhaps, DEKKER had the advantage of his antagonist in the bitterness of his sarcasms, and the severity of his personal reflections; but the principal plot of Jonson's comedy is far more diverting than that of his adversary, as the characters of the poets who flourished at the court of Augustus, which are described with great learning and accuracy, have something in them more interesting to us, than those of sir QUINTILIAN SHORTHORSE, and the courtiers of WILLIAM RUFUS, in whose reign our poet represents the disgrace of poor HORACE. On the whole, we cannot help being more inclined to favour Dekker, who only meant to retaliate the insults of his rival, than Jonson, who first insulted him, and who seems by all his writings to have been of an arrogant and overbearing spirit,

* See the Preface to *The Supposits*.

unwilling to allow his contemporaries their due share of praise, or to bear a poetical brother near his throne.

As the piece which follows, called *THE RETURN FROM PARNASSUS*, is, perhaps, the most singular composition in our language, it may be proper to give a succinct analysis of it. This Satirical Drama seems to have been composed by the wits and scholars of Cambridge, where it was acted at the opening of the last century. The design of it was, to expose the vices and follies of the rich in those days, and to show that little attention was paid by that class of men to the learned and ingenious. Several Students of various capacities and dispositions leave the university in hopes of advancing their fortunes in the metropolis. One of them attempts to recommend himself by his publications; another, to procure a benefice by paying his court to a young spark, named *AMORETTO*, with whom he had been intimate at college; two others endeavour to gain a subsistence by successively appearing as physicians, actors, and musicians: but the Man of Genius is disregarded, and at last prosecuted for his productions; the benefice is sold to an illiterate Clown; and in the end, three of the scholars are compelled to submit to a voluntary exile; another returns to Cambridge as poor as when he left it; and the other two, finding that neither their medicines nor their music would support them, resolve to turn shepherds, and to spend the rest of their days on the Kentish downs. There is a great variety of Characters in this play, which are excellently distinguished and supported; and some of the scenes have as much wit as can be desired in a perfect comedy. The simplicity of its plan must naturally bring to our mind the Old Species of Comedy described by Horace, in which, before it was restrained by a public edict, living characters were exposed by name upon the stage, and the audience made merry at their expence without any intricacy of plot, or diversity of action: Thus in the piece before us *BURBAGE* and *KEMPE*, two famous actors, appear in their proper persons;

sons; and a number of acute observations are made on the poets of that age, of whom the Editor has given an account in the notes, and has added some chosen specimens of their poetry.

WILY BEGUILLED, which closes the third volume, is a regular and very pleasing Comedy; and, if it were judiciously adapted to the manners of the times, would make no contemptible appearance on the modern stage.

This was the state of the English Theatre when SHAKESPEARE rose; who by the force of his genius, without any assistance from learning, brought the Modern Species of Drama to so high a degree of perfection, that it rivals or surpasses the severer and more elegant models of old Greece and Rome. The charms of his versification, from which our dramatic Blank Verse has been gradually degenerating, the beauty of his speeches and descriptions, but, above all, the great art of expressing the vehement passions, in which no writer of any age ever equalled him, have supported his reputation, notwithstanding some human blemishes, for near two centuries; and whatever praise be due to the Tragedies of the Ancients in the light of pure and finished compositions, we cannot consider them as the only models of the drama, but SHAKESPEARE still remains the Dramatic Poet of the English.

It was thought, that a work which should tend to illustrate the beauties, and extenuate the faults of this great man, the boast and wonder of our nation; which should exhibit in a distinct view the rise and gradual improvements of our Drama before his time; which should contain, as it were, a History of our Language and Versification, and bring to light the productions of several ingenious men, would not be unacceptable to an English reader; and it is in this view principally, that the Editor hopes for his indulgence. He was persuaded, that no publication, however removed from the refinements of this polished age, could be undeserving of the public attention, if it contained the literary monuments and
poetical

poetical antiquities of our island, and made us better acquainted with the genius of our ancestors; and he remembered, that even Cicero, in the most refined age of the Roman language, was fond of embellishing his rhetorical pieces with quotations from the Old Dramatic Poets of his country.

After these observations on the nature and intent of the present publication, the Editor will be more concise with regard to himself. He begs leave to inform the Reader, that, having had the honour of conducting a new edition of sir Thomas Hanmer's SHAKESPEARE, under the immediate direction of the university of Oxford, he was naturally thrown into a course of reading the productions of our first dramatic writers, in order to explain and illustrate the obsolete phrases and allusions to ancient customs, which occur in the works of our great poet. The beauties, which he discovered in some of these old plays, being greatly obscured by the inaccuracy of modern editors, he was induced to make inquiries after the earliest and most correct impressions of them: in which pursuit he received assistance from many persons of note in the literary world, and particularly from Mr. Garrick, who very politely communicated to him the treasures of his large and invaluable Collection.

In selecting such pieces as seemed worthy of the public attention, the editor avoided, in general, giving those, which had already been printed by Mr. Doddsley; but he could not, consistently with his plan, omit The Spanish Tragedy, which, as it stands in the present collection, cleared of the many gross errors in the former edition, appears almost a different work. The same may be said of Ferrex and Porrex, which being printed by Doddsley from a surreptitious copy, has hardly a single speech the same with the present edition.

The editor has avoided the tedious pomp of too many philological notes, and, though in a course of reading with a view to his work he cannot but have collected sufficient materials, yet he has chosen to suppress all those,

those, which might disturb the attention without assisting the judgment, and to give no more than might tend to elucidate a few particular passages, or to explain some contemporary writer. Wherever he has presumed to deviate from the copies before him, many of which he found exceedingly incorrect, he has printed the Original Reading at the bottom of the page; and, if in any passage he has not been happy enough to discover the true one, he hopes the candid reader will excuse the boldness of his conjectures.

But his principal care, through the whole work has been to admit no composition, how ancient or elegant soever, in which the author has not paid the strictest regard to virtue, and morality; for without these the finest productions of human genius are of no value and deserve no attention.

THE END OF THE PREFACE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following sheets were printed off, and nothing remained except committing the Dedication and Preface, (already finished,) to the Press; when a violent disorder put a period at once to the Life and the Labours of the learned and ingenious Editor. Had this misfortune been confined merely to his Friends, the loss would have been great: but the Public is likewise interested in it; as it was his design, in case of due encouragement, to have made another selection of our old Dramatic Compositions, which he would have given to the world with equal accuracy and judgement; and afterwards to have proceeded to other useful and elegant Publications. He died Oct. 23. 1772. Aged 44.

TO
SIR JOHN HAWKINS,
CHAIRMAN
OF THE QUARTER SESSIONS FOR THE
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX.

SIR,

I Think myself peculiarly happy in the honour of being permitted to prefix your name to the following sheets. At the same time I must not deny, that, in my application to you for this favour, I was also influenced by motives of self-interest: as I am confident, your name, sir, will prepossess the reader in behalf of the work; and that, when he is informed, it has been approved of by you, it will need no further recommendation. I mean not here to arrogate to myself the merit of other men's labours: I pretend to no more than that of rescuing from oblivion

DEDICATION.

the works of some of our ingenious ancestors, and rendering them intelligible to every reader ; to the effecting of which you, sir, by your judicious remarks, communicated to me, have not a little contributed.

It would be needless to inform the public either of your general love of literature, or your particular skill in criticism, especially upon the works of our great dramatic poet, as you have presented them more than once with specimens of both ; and will soon give us a further proof in your general history of music, which I am informed you are now publishing with infinite labour and expence : a work which, I doubt not, will do honour to yourself, and to your country.

Were this dedication intended as a panegyric, and not merely as a testimony of my respect and esteem, I should also expatiate upon the services you have so frequently

DEDICATION.

quently done the public in your capacity of a magistrate, and by your thorough knowledge of the laws of your country. Though even here, my attempt would be superseded by that public evidence you have given of the one, in your late excellent and spirited charge to the Grand Jury of Middlesex, in opposition to the turbulent spirit of sedition and riot; and by those testimonies of the other which were borne you by that court of judicature in which you preside, and by the inhabitants of your parish of St. Andrew's, Holbourn; memorials of your services in rescuing by a series of legal and political arguments in the one instance the county of Middlesex, and in the other your fellow parishioners, from oppressions under the sanction of law.

Your proposal for reducing the several statutes relating to the highways into one, the publication whereof was immediately followed by an act of the legislature for
that

DEDICATION.

that purpose, is an equal confirmation of your proficiency in English jurisprudence, and of your well-known benevolence to oppressed industry.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect, Sir,

Your most obliged and obedient

humble servant,

THOMAS HAWKINS.

CANDLEMAS-DAY,

OR

THE KILLING OF THE
CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

A MYSTERY.



CANDLEMAS-DAY,
Or
THE KILLING OF THE CHILDREN
OF ISRAEL.

As this volume is devoted to the earlier species of the Drama, it may not be unacceptable to the reader to see a specimen of dramatick amusement, previous to the Reformation; especially, as no such has been presented to the publick, of a date antecedent to that æra. The following Mystery is preserved in the Bodleian Library amongst the MSS. bequeathed to the university by Sir Kenelm Digby: It was written by one Ihan Parfre in 1512, of whom our biographers are totally silent; and there remain no traces, by which we can discover what was the condition, or profession of the author. If any doubt should arise of the authenticity of the date of this play, the reader is referred to the original itself: vide Cod. MSS. Kenelmi Digby, 1734. 133.

The NAMES of the PLEYERS.

THE POETE.

Kyng HEROWD.

1 *Knyght.*

2 *Knyght.*

3 *Knyght.*

4 *Knyght.*

WATKIN, *Messanger.*

SYMEON, *the Bysshop.*

JOSEPH.

MARIA.

ANNA, *Prophetissa.*

A Virgyn.

ANGELUS.

1 *Mulier.*

2 *Mulier.*

3 *Mulier.*

4 *Mulier.*

Ihan Parfre *ded write thys booke.*

CANDLEMAS-DAY,
O R,
THE KILLING OF THE
CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.

A^o. Do. 1512.

Poeta.

THIS solemne fest to be had in remembraunce
Of blisfed seynt *Anne*, moder to our lady,
Whos ryght discent was fro kyngs allyaunce,
Of *Davyd* and *Salamon* witnesseth the story ;
Hir blisfid doughter, that callid is *Mary*,
By Godds provision an husband shuld have,
Callid *Josepb*, of nature old and drye,
And the moder unto *Christ* that all the world shall save :

This glorious maiden doughter unto *Anna*,
In whos worship this fest we honour,
And by resembraunce likenyd unto manna,
Wiche is in tast coelestiall of savour,
And of *Jerico* the sote rose floure,
Gold *Abryson* callid in picture,
Chosyn for to bere mankynds savour ;
With a prerogative above eche creature.

These grett thyngs remembred, after our entent
Is for to worshyppe oure lady and seynt *Anne* :
We be comen heder as servaunts diligent
Oure processe to shewe you as we can ;
Wherfor of benevolence we pray every man,
To have us excused, that we no better doo,
An other tyme to emende it if we can,
Be the grace of God, if our cunnyng be ther too.

The last year we shewid you, and in this place,
 How the shepherds of *Crist* by the made letification,
 And thre kyngs that ycome fro the cuntrees be grace
 To worship *Jesu* with enteer devotion:
 And now we propose with hooll affection,
 To procede in ourt matter as we can,
 And to shew you of our ladies purification,
 That she made in the temple, as the usage was than:

And after that shall Herowd have tydynge,
 How the thre kyngs be goon hoome another way,
 That were with *Jesu*, and made ther offryngs,
 And promysed kynge *Herowde*, without delay
 To come a geyn by him; this is no nay.
 And whan he wist that thei were goon,
 Like as a wodman he gan to fray,
 And commaunded his knyght soth to go a noon

In to *Israell*, to serche every towne and cite
 For all the children that thei cowde ther fynde,
 Of ij yeers age and under, sparyng neither bonde nor frete,
 But sle them all, either for foo or frende;
 Thus he commaunded in his furious mynde;
 Thought that *Jesu* shuld have be oon,
 And yitt he failed of his froward mynde;
 For by Gods providaunce our lady was in to *Egypte* gon.

Friends, this processe we propose to pley as we can,
 Before you all here in your presens,
 To the honor of God, our lady, and seynt *Anne*;
 Beseechyng you to geve us pefeable audiens.
 And, ye menstrallis doth your diligens;
 And, ye virgynes, shewe same sport and plesure,
 These people to solas, and to do God reverens;
 As ye be appoynted doth your besy cure.

*Et tripudent.*¹

¹ *tripident. &c.*

CANDLEMAS-DAY, &c.

Herodes.

ABOVE all kynges under the clowdys cristall,
Royally I reigne in welthe without woo,
Of plesaunt prosperytie I lakke non at all;
Fortune I fynde, that she is not my foo,
I am kyng *Herowd*, I will it be knowen so,
Most strong and myghty in feld for to fyght,
And to venquyshe my enemyes that a geynst me do;
I am most be dred with my bronde bryght.

My grett goddes I gloryfye with gladnesse,
And to honour them I knele up on my knee;
For thei have sett me in solas from all sadnesse,
That no conqueroure nor knyght is compared to me;
All the that rebelle a geys me ther bane I will be,
Or grudge a geys my godds on hyll or hette;
All suche rebellers I shall make for to flee,
And with hard punysheiments putt them to dethe.

What erthely wretches, what pompe and pride,
Do a geys my lawes or withstonde myne entent,
Thei shall suffre woo and peyne through bak and syde,
With a very myschaunce ther fleshe shal be all to rent;
And all my foes shall have suche commaundement
That they shalbe glad to do my byddyn ay,
Or ells thei shalbe in woo and myscheff permanent,
That thei shall fere me nyght and day.

My

My messanger, at my commaundement come heder
to me,

And take hed what I shall to the say :
I charge the, loke a bought thurgh my cuntre
To aspye if ony rebell do a geynst our lay : *
And if ony suche come in thy way,
Brynge hem in to our hygh presens,
And we shall se them correctid, or thei go hens.

Watkyn, the Messanger.

My lord, your commaundement I have fulfilled
Evyn to the uttermost of my pore power ;
And I wold shew you more, so ye wold be contentid,
But I dare not, lest ye wold take it in anger :
For if it liked you not, I am sure my deth were nere ;
And therfor, my lord, I wole hold my peas.

Herod.

I warne the, thn traytor, that thu not seas
To observe every thyng thu knowest a gcyns our
reverence.

Messanger.

My lord, if ye have it in your remembraunce,
Ther were iij straunger knyghts, but late in your presence,
That went to *Bedlem* to offire with due observaunce,
And promysed to come a geyn by you without variaunce ;
But by ther bonys ten, thei be to you untrue,
For homeward an other wey thei doo sue.

Herod.

Now be my grett godds, that be so full of myght
I will be a vengid upon *Israell*, if this tale be true.

* a geynst our LAY ; i.e. against our law : So again, pag. 206 Vol. 2d.
— not for thy LAY, not for thy law ; not on account of thy religion : from
the French, Loy. — So in the old story of Sir Cauline, a Pagan Knight is
called upon to

— believe on Christe his LAYE.

See *Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poet.* Vol. I. p. 45.

Messanger.

Messanger.

That it is, my lord, my trouthe I you plight,
For ye founde me never false syn ye me knewe.

Herod.

I do perceyve, though I be here in my cheff cite,
Callid *Jerusalem*, my riche royall town,
I am falsly disceyved by straunge knyghts three:
Therfor, my knyghts, I warne you, without delacion,
That ye make serche thurgh out all my region,
Withoute ony tarieng my wille may be seen,
And fle all tho children without excepcion
Of to yeers of age, that within *Israell* bene:

For within my self thus I have concluded,
For to avoide a wey all interrupcion,
Sythens thes thre knyghts have me thus falsly deluded,
As in manner by froward collusion,
And a geyn reforted hom in to ther region:
But yitt, maugre ther herts, I shall avengid be:
Bothe in *Bedlem* and my provynces everychone,
Sle all the children to kepe my liberte.

1 Miles.

My lord, ye may be sure that I shall not spare
For to fulfille your noble commaundement,
With sharpe sword to perfe them all bare,
In all cuntrees that be to you adjacent.

2 Miles.

And for your sake to observe your commaundement.

3 Miles.

Not on of them all our hands shall astert.

4 Miles.

For we wole cruelly execute your judgement
With swerde and speere to perfe them thurgh the hert.

Herod.

I thanke you, my knyghts; but loke ye, make no
tarieng,
Go arme your self in stele shynyng bright;
And conceyve in your mynds, that I am your kyng.

Geving

Gevyng you charge, that with all your myght^e
 In confirmacion of my tytell of ryght,
 That ye go and loke for myn advantage,
 And sle all the children that come in your sight
 Wiche ben within two years of age.

Now be ware, that my byddying ye truly obey,
 For non but I shall reigne with equyte;
 Make all the children on your swords to dey,
 I charge you, spare not oon for mercy nor pyte.
 Am not I lord and kyng of the cuntre?
 The crowne of all *Jerusalem* longith to me of right;
 Who so ever sey nay of high or lowe degre,
 I charge you, sle all suche that come in your syght.

1 Miles.

My lord, be ye sure, accordyng to your will,
 Like as ye charge us be streight commaundement,
 All the children of *Israell* doubtes we shall kyll
 Within to yeers of age, this is our entent.

2 Miles.

My lord of all *Jurye*, we hold you for chef regent,
 By titell of enheritaunce as your auncestors be for;
 He that seith the contrary, be *Mabound*, shalbe shent,
 And curse the tyme that ever was born.

Herod.

I thanke you, my knyghts, with hool affection,
 And whan ye come ageyn I shall you avaunce;
 Therfor quyte you wele in feld and town,
 And of all the fondlyngs make a delyverance.

*Here the Knyghts shall departe from Herowd to Israell;
 and Watkyn shall abyde, seying thus to Herod:*

*Watkin.**

Now, my lord, I beseeche you to here my dalyaunce,
 I wole aske you a bone, if I durst a right;

* This Comick character seems to have been introduced to entertain the populace.

But

But I were loth ye shuld take any displeaunce :

Now, for *Mabounds* sake, make me a knyght.

For oon thyng I promyse you, I will manly fight,
And for to avenge your quarrell I dare undertake ;
Though I sey my self, I am a man of myght,
And dare live and deye in this quarrell for your sake ;
For whan I com amonge them, for fere thei shall quake ;
And, though thei sharpe and crye, I care not a myght,
But with my sharpe sworde ther ribbes I shall shake
Evyn thurgh the guttes for anger and despight.

Herowd.

Be thi trouthe, *Watkyn*, woldest thou be made a knyght ?
Thou hast be my servaunt and messanger many a day,
But thou were never provid in bataille nor in fight,
And therfor to avaunce the so sodenly I ne may :
But oon thyng to the I shall say,
Be cause I fynde the true in thyn entent,
Forth with my knyghts thou shalt take the way,
And quyte the wele, and thou shalt it not repent.

Watkyn.

Now a largeys, my lord, I am ryght wele apaid,
If I do not wele, ley my hed upon a stokke ;
I shall go shew your knyghts how ye have seid,
And arme my self manly and go forth on the flokke,
And if I fynde a young child I shall choppe it on a
blokke,

Though the moder be angry the child shalbe flayn :

But yitt I dredde no thyng more than a woman with a
rokke,

For if I se ony foeke, he my feith, I come a geyn.

Herowd.

What, shall a woman with a rokke drive thee away ?

Fye on thee, traitor, now I tremble for tene,

I have traffed the long, and many a daye ;

A bold man and an hardy I went † thou haddist ben.

† i. e. ween'd.

Watkyn.

Watkyn.

So am I, my lord, and that shalbe seen,
That I am a bold man and best dare a byde,
And ther come an hundred women I wole not fleen,
But fro morrowe tyll nyght with them I dare chide.

And therfor, my lord, ye may trust unto me ;
For all the children of *Israell* your knyghts and I shall
kylle,

I wyll not spare on, butt dede thei shall be,
If the fader and moder will lete me have my wille.

Herowd.

Thu lurdeyn, † take hed what I sey the tyll,
And high the to my knyghts as fast as thu can :
Say, I warne them in ony wyse ther blood that thei spille,
A bought in every cuntre, and lette for no man.

Watkyn.

Nay, nay, my lord, we wyll let for no man,
Though ther come a thousand on a rought ;
For your knyghts and I will kylle them all, if we can :
But for the wyves that is all my dought,
And if I se ony walkyng a bought,
I will take good hede tyll the be goon,
And assone as I aspye that she is oute,
By my feith, into the hous I will go anon.

And this I promyse you, that I shall never slepe,
But evermore wayte to fynde the children alone ;
And if the moder come in, under the bench I will crepe,
And lye stille ther tyll she be goon,
Than manly I shall come out and hir children sloon,
And whan I have don I shall renne fast away :
If she founde hir child dede, and toke me ther alone,
Be my feith, I am sure we shuld make a fray.

Herowd.

Nay, harlott, abyde styлле with my knyghts I warne the,
Tyll the children be slayn all the hool rought ;

† Lur-Dane was a name given by our ancestors to the Danes for their
lousyness, insolence, and cowardise. See Webb's Vind. of Stone-Heng.
p. 427.

And

And whan thou comyft home a gayn I fhall avauce the,
 If thou quyte thee like a man whill thou art ought,
 And if thou pley the coward, I put the owt of dought,
 Of me thou fhalt neyther have fe nor advauntage,
 Therfor I charge you the contre be well fought,
 And whan thou comyft home fhalt have thi wage.

Watkyn.

Yis, fer, be my trouthe, ye fhall wele knowe
 Whill I am oute how I fhall aquyte me,
 For I propofe to fpare neither high nor lowe,
 If ther be no man wole fmyte me:
 The moft I fere the wyves will bete me,
 Yitt fhall I take good hert to me and loke wele aboute.
 And loke that your knyghts be not ferre fro me,
 For if I be alone I may fone gete a flought.

Hered.

I fay, hye the hens, that thou were goon,
 And unto my knyghts loke ye take the way,
 And fey, I charge them that my commaundement be don
 In all haft poffible without more delay;
 And if ther be ony that will fey you nay,
 Redde him of his lyff out of hand anon;
 And if thou quyte the weell unjo my pay,
 I fhall make the a knyght aventryous whan thou comyft
 home.

Watkyn.

Syr knyghts, I muft go forth with you,
 Thus my lord commaunded me for to don;
 And if I quyte me weell whill I am amonge you,
 I fhall be made a knyght aventrys whan I come home:
 For oon thyng I promyfe you, I will fight anon,
 If my hert faile not whan I fhall be gynne;
 The moft I fere is to come amonge women,
 For thei fight like devells with ther rokke whan thei
 fpyne.

1 Miles.

Watkyn, I love thee, for thou art even a man;
 If thou quyte the weell in this grett viage,

I fhall

I shall speke to my lord for the that I can,
That thou shalt no more be neither grome nor page:

2 Miles.

I wyll speke for the that thou shalt have better wage,
If thou quyte the manly amonge the wyves;
For thei be as fers as a lyon in a cage,
Whan thei are vroken ought to reue men of ther lives.

*Here the Knyghts and Watkyn walks about the
place tyll Mary and Joseph be conueid in to Egypt,
Dixit Angelus.*

Angelus.

O *Joseph*, ryse up, and loke thou tary nought;
Take *Mary* with the, and in to *Egypt* flee;
For *Jesu* thy sone pursuyd is and sought
By kyng *Herowd*, the wiche of grete inyquyte
Commaunded hath thurgh *Bedlem* cite,
In his cruell and furyous rage,
To sle all the children that be in that cuntre,
That may be founde within to yeers of age:
Ther shall he shewe in that region
Diverse myracles of his high regalye,
In all ther temples the mawments shall falle down,
To shew a tokyn towards the partie,
This child hath lordship, as prophets do speake,
And at his comyng thurgh his myghty hond
In despight of all idolatrye,
Every oon shall falle whan he comyth in to the lond.

Joseph.

O good lord, of thi gracious ordenaunce,
Like as thou list for our journey provide,
In this viage with humble attendaunce
As God disposeth and list to be our gyde,
Therfor upon them bothe mekely I shall abide,
Praying to that Lord to thynk upon us three,
Us to preserve wheder we go or ryde
Towards *Egypte* from all aduercitie.

Mary.

Mary.

Now, huiſband, in all hart I pray you, go we hens,
For dredd of *Herowd* that cruell knyght:
Gentyll ſpouſe, now do your diligens,
And bryng your affe, I pray you, a non right,
And from hens let us paſſe with all our myght.
Thankyng that Lord ſo for us doth provide,
That we may go from *Herowd* that curſed wyght,
Wiche will us devour if that we abide.

Joſeph.

Mary, you to do pleaſaunce without ony lett
I ſhall brynge forth your affe without more delay;
Fulſone, *Mary*, theron ye ſhalbe ſett,
And this litell child that in your wombe lay,
Take hym in your armys, *Mary*, I you pray,
And of your ſwete mylke let him ſowke inowe,
Mawger *Herowd* and his grett fray:
And as your ſpouſe, *Mary*, I ſhall go with you.

This ferdell of gere I ley upon my bakke:
Now I am redy to go from this cuntre,
All my ſmale inſtruments is putt in my pakke.

[*Et exeunt.*

Now go we hens, *Mary*, it will no better be,
For drede of *Herowd*, a paas I wyll high me.
Lo, now is our geer truſſid both more and leſſe:
Mary, for to pleie you with all humylite
I ſhall go be fore, and lede forth your affe.

*Here Mary and Joſeph ſhall go out of the place, and
the godds ſhall fall: and than ſhall come in the
women of Iſrael with young children in ther armys,
and than the knyghts ſhall go to them ſayng as
ſoluyth:*

1 Miles.

Herke, ye wyffys, we be come your houſhold to viſite;
Though ye be never ſo wroth nor wood,
With ſharpe ſwerds that redely will byte,

ALL

16 CANDLEMAS-DAY, &c.

All your children within to yeers age in our cruell mood
Thurgh out all *Bethleem* to kylle and shed ther young
blood,

As we be bound be the commaundement of the kyng :
Who that seith nay, we shall make a flood
To renne in the stretis by ther blood shedyng.

2 *Miles.*

Therfor unto us ye make a dely veraunce
Of your young children, and that a none,
Or ells, be *Mabounde*, we shall geve a myschaunce,
Our sharpe swerds thurgh your bodies shall goon.

Watkyn.

Therfor be ware, for we will not leve oon
In all this cuntre that shall us escape,
I shall rather flee them everychoon,
And make them to lye and mowe like an ape.

1 *Mulier.*

Eye on you, traitors of cruell tormentrye,
Wiche with your swerds of mortall violens,—

2 *Mulier.*

Our young children, that can no socoure but crie,
Wyll flee and devoure in ther innocens.

3 *Mulier.*

Ye false traitors unto God, ye do grett offens,
To sle and morder young children that in the cradell
slumber.

4 *Mulier.*

But we women shall make a geyns you resistens
After our power, your malice to encomber.

Watkyn.

Peas, you folysh queynys, wha shuld you defende
Ageyns us armyd men in this appaile ?
We be bold men, and the kyng us ded sende
Hedyr in to this cuntre to hold with you battaile.

1 *Mulier.*

Eye upon the coward, of the I will not faile
To dubbe the knyght with my rokke rounde ;

Women

Women be ferse when thei list to assaile,
Suche proude boyes to caste to the grounde.

2 *Mulier.*

Avaunt, ye skowtys, I defye you everychone,
For I wole bete you all my self alone.

[*Watkyn hic occidet per se.*

1 *Mulier.*

Alas, alasse, good cosfynnes, this is a sorowfull peyn,
To se our dere children that be so yong
With these caytyves thus sodeynly to be slayn:
A vengeance I aske on them all for this grett wrong.

2 *Mulier.*

And a very myscheff mut come them a monge,
Werfo ever thei be come or goon;
For thei have killed my yong sone *John*.

3 *Mulier.*

Gossippis, a shamefull deth I aske upon *Herowde* our
kyng,
That thus rygorously our children hath slayn.

4 *Mulier.*

I pray God bryng hym to an ille endyng,
And in helle pytte to dwelle ever in peyn.

Watkyn.

What, ye harlots? I have aspied certeyn,
That ye be tratorys to my lord the kyng,
And therfor I am sure, ye shall have an ille endyng.

1 *Mulier.*

If ye abide, *Watkyn*, you and I shall game
With my distaff that is so rounde.

2 *Mulier.*

And if I seas thanne have I shame,
Tyll thou be fellid down to the grounde.

3 *Mulier.*

And I may gete the within my bounde,
With this staffe I shall make thee lame.

Watkyn.

Yee, I come no more ther, be seynt *Mabound*;
For if I do, methynketh I shall be made tame.

VOL. I.

B

1 *Mulier.*

1 *Mulier.*

Abyde, *Watkyn*, I shall make the a knyght.

Watkyn.

Thy make me a knyght? that were on the newe;
But for shame, my trouthe I you plight,
I shud bete you bak and side tyll it were blewe;
But, be my God *Mabounde*, that is so true,
My hert be gynne to fayle, and waxeth feynt,
Or ells, be *Mabounds* blood, ye shuld it rue,
But ye shall lose your goods as traitors atteynt.

1 *Mulier.*

What, thy jabel, canst not have do?
Thy and thy company shall not depart,
Tyll of our distavys ye have take part.—
Therfor ley on, gossippes, with a mery hart,
And lett them not from us goo.

*Here thei shall bete Watkyn; and the Knyghts shall
come to rescue hym, and than thei go to Herowds
bous sayng —*

1 *Miles.*

Honorable pryace of grett apparayle,
Thurgh *Jerusalem* and *Jude*, your wyll we have wrought,
Full suerly harneyfed in arms of plate and maile,
The children of *Israell* unto deth we have brought.

2 *Miles.*

Syr, to werke your commaundement we lettid nought,
In the strets of the children to make a flood;
We sparid neither for care nor thought,
Thurgh *Bethlem* to shedde all the young blood.

Watkyn.

In feyth, my lord, all the children be dede,
And all the men out of the cuntre be goon;
Ther be but women, and thei crie in every stede,
A vengeance take kyng *Herode*, for he hath our children
slean!

And bidde, a mischeff take him both evyn and morn!

For

For kylling of ther children on you thei crie oute;
And thus goth your name all the cuntre abought.

Herodes.

Oute, I am madde, my wyttes be nei goon,
I am wo for the working of this werke wylde;
For as wele I have slayn my frends as my foon,
Wherfor I fere, deth hath me begyled;
Notwithstandyng syn thei be all defyled,
And on the young blood of *Bethlem* wrought wo and
wrake,

Yitt I am in no certeyn of that yong child:
Now for woo myn herte gynneth to quake.

Alas, I am so sorowful and sett in of sadnes,
I chille and chevere for this horrible chaunce;
I commaunde you all, as ye wole stond in my grace,
Aft this yong kyng to mak good enqueraunce,
And he that bryngeth me tydyngs I shall hym avaunce,
Now unto my chamber I purpose me this tyde,
And I charge you, to my precept geve attendaunce,
In any place wher ye goo or ryde.

What, out, out alas! I wene I shall dey this day;
My hert tremblith and quakith for feer,
My robys I rende a to; for I am in a fray,
That my hert will brest asunder evyn heer. —
My lord *Mabound*, I pray the with hert enteer,
Take my soule in to thy holy hande;
For I fele by my hert, I shall dey evyn heer,
For my leggs falter, I may no lenger stande.

Here dietb Herowde, and Symeon shall sey as folowth:

Symeon.

Now, God, that art both lok and keye
Of all goodnesse and goostly governaunce,
So geve us grace thi lawys to obeye,
That we unto the do no displeasaunce;
Lett thi grace of mercifull haboundaunce

Upon me shyne, that callid am *Symeon*,

So that I may without any variaunce

Teche thi people thi lawis everychon:

From the sterred hevyn, lord, thou list come down

In to the closett of a pure virgyn,

Our kynde to take for mannys salvation,

Thi grett mercy thou lowe lyst enclyne,

Lyke as prophetys by grace that is divyne

Have prophesied of the, sythe longe afforn;

It is fulfilled, I knowe be ther doctryne,

And of a chaste maide, I wote wele, thou art born,

Now, good Lord, hertly I the pray,

Here my requeste, grounded upon right:

Most blissed Lord, lett me never dey

Tyll that I of the may have a sight;

Thou art so glorious, so blissed, and so bright,

That thi presence to me shuld be gret solas:

I shall not reste, but pray bothe day and nyght

Tyll I may behold, o Lord, thi swete face.

*Here shall our Lady come forth boldyng Jesu in hir
armys, and sey this laingunge soluyng to Joseph.*

Maria.

Joseph, my spouse, tyme it is, we goo

Unto the temple to make an offrynge

Of our swete sone; the law commandith so,

And ij yonge dowys with us for to bryng

In to a prests hands, without tarieng,

I shall presente for an observaunce,

Our babe so blissed wiche is but yonge

With me to go, I pray you, make purviaunce.

Joseph.

Most blissed spouse, me list not to feyne,

Fayn wold I please you with hool affection;

Behold now, wyff, here are dowys tweyne,

Of wiche ye shall make an oblacion,

With our child of full grett devocion:

Goth

Goth forth a forn, hertly I you pray,
And I shall folue, void of presumption,
With true entent as an old man may.

*Here Maria and Joseph go towards the temple with Jesu
and ij dowes, and our lady seith unto Symeon:*

Maria.

Heyll, holy Symeon, full of grett vertu;
To make an offryng I gan my self perveye
Of my sovereyne sone that callid is Jesu,
With ij yonge dowes, the lawe to obeye,
Toward this temple, grace list me conveye,
Of Godds sone to make a presentacion;
Wherefore, Symeon, hertly I you pray,
In to your hande take myn oblacion.

*Here shall Symeon receyve of Maria, Jesu, and ij
dowis, and holde Jesu in his armys expownyng Nunc
dimittis &c. seyng thus:*

Symeon.

Welcome, lord, excellent of power;
And welcome, Maria, with your sone sovereyne:
Your oblacion of hool herte and enteer
I receyve, with these dowys tweyne:
Welcome, babe; for joye what may I feyn?
Atwen myn armys now shall I thee embrace:
My prayer, Lord, was not made in veyn,
For now I se thy celestiall face.

[Here declare Nunc dimittis.]

O blissed Lord, aft thi language,
In parfight peas now lett thy servaunt reste;
For why, myn eyen have feyn thi visage,
And eke thyn helthe thurgh my meke request:
Of the derk dungeon let the gats brest

Before the face of thyn people alle ;
 Thu hast brought triacle and bawme of the best
 With sovereyne suger geyn all bitter galle :

I mene thi self, Lord, gracious and benigne,
 That woldest come down from thyn high glorye
 Poyson to repelle, thi mercy doth now shyne
 To chainge thyngs that are transitory,
 Thu art the light and the hevyngly skye
 To the relevyng of folk most cruell,
 Thu hast brought gladnesse to our oratorye,
 And enlumyned thy people of *Israell*,

Here shall Anna prophetissa sey thus to Virgynes :

Anna Prophetissa.

Ye pure virgynes, in that ye may or can,
 With tapers of wax loke ye come forth here,
 And worship this child very God and man,
 Offrid in this temple be his moder dere.

*Here virgynes as many as a man wyll shall holde tapers
 in ther bands ; and the first seyth :*

1 Virgo.

As ye commaunde we shall do our dever
 That lorde to plesse echon for our partye,
 He makyth for us so comfortable chere
 That we must nede your babe magnifie.

Symeon.

Now, *Mary*, I shall tell you how I am purposed ;
 To worship your lord I wil go percession,
 For I see *Anna* with virgynes disposed
 Mekly as now to your sonys laudacion.

Maria.

Blissed *Symeon*, with hertly affection
 As ye have seyed I concent therto.

Joseph.

Joseph.

In worship of our child with grett deuotion
Abought the tempill in order let us go.

Symeon.

Ye virgynes alle, with feythfull entent
Dispose your filf a songe for to synge,
To worship this childe that is here present,
Whiche to mankende gladnes list bryng,
In tokyn our herts, wiche joye doth spryng,
Betwyn myn armys this babe shalbe born,
Now, ye virgynis, to this Lord prayfing,
Syngyth *Nunc dimittis* of whiche I spak afforn.

*Here shal Symeon bere Jesu in his armys goyng a
percession rounde aboute the tempill, and al this wyle
Virgynis singe Nunc dimittis; and whan that is
don Symeon seyth :*

Symeon.

O *Jesu*, chef cause of our welfare,
In yone tapirs ther be thyngs iij,
Wax weck and lyght, whiche I shall declare
To the apporprid by moralite:
Lorde, wax betokyneth thyn humanyte,
And weck betokyneth thy soule most swete,
Yone lyght I lyken to the godhede of the,
Brighter than *Phebus* for al his fervent hete,
Pes and mercy han set in the here swete
To slake the sharpnes, o Lorde, of rigour,
Very God and man grace togedir mete.
In the tabiracle of thy modrys bower:
Now shalt thou exile wo and al langour,
And of mankende tappese infernall stryf,
Record of prophets thou shalt be redemptour,
And singuler repast of everlastyng lyf,
My sprete joyeth thou art so amyable,

I am

I am not wery to loke on thi face,
 Our trowe entent let it be acceptable,
 To the honor of the shewys in this place;
 For thy friends a dwellyng thu shalt purchase,
 Brighter than berall outhere clere crystall,
 Thee to worship as cheif welles of grace:
 On both my knees now down knele I shall.

Maria.

Now, *Symeon*, take me my childe that is so bright,
 Cheif lodesterre of my felicyte;
 And all that longyth to the lawe of right
 I shall obeye, as it lyth in me.

Symeon.

This, Lord, I take you knelyng on my kne,
 Whiche shall to blisse folk ageyn restore,
 And so be callid tonne of tranquylte,
 To geve them drynke that hem thyrstyd fore.

Here she receyveth hir sone thus seyng:

Maria.

Now is myn offrynge to an ende conveyed;
 Wherefore, *Symeon*, hens I wolde bende.

Symeon.

The lawes, *Mary*, fulwell ye han obeyed
 In this tempill with hert and mende.
 Now ferwell, Lord, comfort to all mankende:
 Ferwell, *Maria*, and *Jeseph* on you waytyng.

Jeseph.

Celestiall socour our sone mot you sende,
 And for his high mercy geve you his bliffyng.

Here Maria and Joseph goyng from the tempill seyng:

Maria.

Husbond, I thank you of your gentilnes,
 That thu han shewed onto me this day,

With

With our child most gracious of godenes :
 Let us go hens, hertly I you pray.

Joseph.

Go forthe afforn, my owne wyf, I sey,
 And I shall come astir stil upon this ground,
 Ye shal me fynde plesant at every assaye;
 To cheryshe you, wyf, gretly am I bonde.

Symeon.

Nowe may I be glad in myn inwarde mynde;
 For I have seyn *Jesu* with my bodely eye,
 Wiche on a crofs shall bey al menkende,
 Slayn by *Jews* at the mount of *Calvary*,
 And throw evyns grace here I will provysye
 Of blissid *Mary*, how she shall suffre peyn,
 Whan hir swete sone shall on a rood deye;
 A sharpe swarde of sorow shall cleve hir hert atweyn.
Anna prophetissa, hertly I prey you nowe,
 Doth your devir and your diligent labour,
 And take these virgynis everychon with you,
 And teche hem to plesse God of most honour.

Anna Prophetissa.

Lyke as ye say, I will do this hour:
 Ye chaste virgynis, with all humilite
 Worshipec we *Jesu* that shalbe our savyour;
 Alle at ones come on, and folowe me.

Anna Prophetissa.

Et tripudient. ¹

Shewe ye fume plesur as ye can,
 In the worship of *Jesu*, our Lady, and seynt *Anne*.

¹ *tripudient.* sic.

Poeta.

Poeta.

Honorable foverignes, thus we conclude
Our matter, that we have shewid here in your presens :
And though our eloquens be but rude,
We beseeche you all of your paciens,
To pardon us of our offens;
For aft the sympyll cunningg that we can,
This matter we have shewid to your audiens,
In the worship of our Lady and hir moder seynt *Anne*.
Nowe of this pore processe we make an ende,
Thankyng you all of your good attendaunce;
And the next yeer, as we be perposid in our mynde,
The disputacion of the doctors to shew in your presens.
Wherfor now, ye vyrgynes, or we go hens,
With all your cumpany you goodly avaunce:
Also ye menstralles doth your diligens,
A fore our depertyng geve us a daunce.

F I N I S.

EVERY-MAN.

A

MORALITY.







E V E R Y - M A N .

This Morality, or moral play, was published early in the reign of Henry VIII. and is given from a black-letter copy, preserved in the library of the church of Lincoln; it was communicated to the editor with the greatest politeness by the Rev. Dr Stinton, chancellor of that church. The design of it was to inculcate great reverence for old mother church and her Popish superstitions.

*As the most ingenious Dr. Percy has given an Analysis of this and the following Moralities, they are, with his permission, prefixed to the present edition. "The subject of this piece "is the summoning of man out of the world by death; and
 "its moral, that nothing will then avail him but a well-spent
 "life and the comforts of religion. This subject and moral are
 "opened in a monologue spoken by the Messenger, (for that
 "was the name generally given by our ancestors to the prologus
 "on their rude stage:) Then God is represented; who, after
 "some general complaints on the degeneracy of mankind, calls
 "for Dethe, and orders him to bring before his tribunal
 "Every-man, for so is called the personage who represents
 "the human race. Every-man appears, and receives the
 "summons with all the marks of confusion and terrour. When
 "Dethe is withdrawn, Every-man applies for relief in this
 "distress to Felawshyp, Kyndrede, Goodes, or Riches, but
 "they successively renounce and forsake him. In this discon-
 "solate state he betakes himself to Good-Dedes, who, after
 "upbraiding him with his long neglect of her, introduces him
 "to her sister Knowledge, and she leads him to the holy
 "man Confession, who appoints him penance: this he in-
 "flicts upon himself on the stage, and then withdraws to
 "receive the sacraments of the priest. On his return he
 "begins to wax faint; and, after Strength, Beaute, Dyf-
 "crecion, and Fyve-wyttes, have all taken their final leave
 "of him, gradually expires on the stage; Good-dedes still
 "accompanying him to the last. Then an Aungell descends to
 "sing*

*"sing his requiem: and the epilogue is spoken by a person,
"called Doctour, who recapitulates the whole, and delivers
"the moral:*

Doctour.

*This moral men may have in mynde;
Ye herers, take it of worth olde and younge,
And forsake pryde, for he deceyveth you in the ende,
And remembre Beaute, Fyve-wyttes, Strength, and
[Dyscrecyon,
They all at the last do Every-man forsake;
Save his Good-dedes there doth he take:
But be ware, and they be smale,
Before God he hath no helpe at all.*

*"From this short analysis it may be observed that EVERY-
"MAN is a grave solemn piece, not without some rude attempts
"to excite terror and pity, and therefore may not improperly
"be referred to the class of tragedy. It is remarkable that
"in this old simple drama the fable is conducted upon the
"strictest model of the Greek tragedy. The action is simply
"one, the time of action is that of the performance, the scene
"is never changed, nor the stage ever empty. Every-man,
"the hero of the piece, after his first appearance never with-
"draws, except when he goes out to receive the sacrament,
"which could not well be exhibited in publick; and during
"this Knowledge descants on the excellence and power of the
"priesthood, somewhat after the manner of the Greek chorus.
"And, indeed, except in the circumstance of Every-man's
"expiring on the stage the Sampson Agonistes of Milton is
"hardly formed on a severer plan."*

HERE

HERE BEGYNNETH A TREATYSE HOW

THE HYE FADER OF HAVEN SENDETH

DETHE TO SOMON EVERY CREATURE TO

COME AND GYVE A COUNTTE OF THEIR

LYVES IN THIS WORLDE, AND IS IN

MANER OF A MORALLE PLAYE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MESSENGER.

GOD.

DETHE.

EVERY-MAN.

FELAWSHIP.

KYNDREDE.

GOODES.

GOOD-DEDES.

KNOWLEGE.

CONFESSION.

BEAUTE.

STRENGTH.

DYSCRESION.

FIVE-WYTTE.

AUNGELL.

DOCTEUR.

Messenger.

I Pray you all gyve your audyence,
And here this mater with reverence,
By figure a morall playe;
The somonyng of Every-man, called it is,
That of our lyves and endynges shewes,
How transytory we be all daye:
This mater is wonders precyous,
But the entent of it is more gracyous,
And swete to bere awaye.
The story sayth, — Man, in the begynnyng
Loke well, and take good heed to the endyng,
Be you never so gay:

Ye thynke synne in the begynnyng full swete,
Whiche in the ende causeth the soule to wepe,
Whan the body lyeth in claye.
Here shall you se how *Felawship*, and *Jolyte*,
Bothe *Strengthe*, *Pleasure*, and *Beaute*,
Wyll fade from the as floure in maye;
For ye shall here, how our heven kynge
Calleth *Every-man* to a generall rekenyng:
Gyve audyence, and here what he doth saye.

EVERY-MAN.

God * speaketh.

I Perceyue here in my majeste,
How that all creatures be to me unkynde,
Lyvyng without drede in worldly prosperyte :
Of ghostly fyght the people be so blynde,
Drowned in synne they know me not for theyr God ;
In worldly ryches is all theyr mynde ;
They fere not my ryghtwynnes, the sharpe rood ;
My lawe that I shewed whan I for them dyed
They forgete clene, and shedyng of my blode rede ;
I hanged bytwene two it can not be denyed ;
To gete them lyfe I suffred to be deed ;
I heled theyr fete, with thornes hurt was my heed ;
I coude do no more than I dyde truely,
And nowe I se the people do clene forsake me ;
They use the seven deedly synnes dampnable,
As pryde, coveytyse, wrath, and lechery,
Now in the worlde be made commendable :
And thus they leve of aungelles the heavenly company,
Every man lyveth so after his owne pleasure,
And yet of theyr lyfe they be nothyng sure :
I se the more that I them forbere
The worse they be fro yere to yere ;

* The second person of the Trinity seems here to be meant. P.

All that lyveth appayreth : faste,
 Therefore I wyll in all the haste
 Have a rekenynge of every mannes persone ;
 For, and I leve the people thus alone
 In theyr lyfe and wycked tempestes,
 Veryly they wyll become moche worse than beestes :
 For now wolde by envy another up etc ;
 Charyte they do all clene forgete :
 I hoped well that every man
 In my glory sholde make his mansyon,
 And therto I had them all electe ;
 But now I se, lyke traytours dejecte,
 They thanke me not for the pleasure that I to them ment,
 Nor yet for theyr beyng that I them have lent :
 I profered the people grete multytude of mercy,
 And fewe there be that asketh it hertly ;
 They be so combred with worldly ryches,
 That nedes on them I must do justyce,
 On every man lyvyng without fere. —
 Where art thou, *Deib*, thou mighty messengere ?

Deibe.

Almyghty God, I am here at your wyll,
 Your commaundement to fulfyll.

God.

Go thou to *Every-man*,
 And shewe hym in my name,
 A plygrymage he must on hym take,
 Whiche he in no wyse may escape ;
 And that he brynge with hym a sure rekenynge,
 Without delay or ony taryenge.

Deibe.

Lorde, I wyll in the worlde go renne over all,
 And cruelly out ferche bothe grete and small ;
 Every man wyll I beset that lyveth beestly,
 Out of Gooddes lawes, and dredeth not foly :

† appayreth the same as impaireth, grows worse, degenerate, &c.,

He

He that loveth rycheffe I wyll stryke with my darte
 His syght to blynde, and fro heven to departe,
 Excepte that almes be his good frende,
 In hell for to dwell worlde without ende.
 Lo, yonder I se *Every-man* walkynge :
 Full lytell he thynketh on my comynge ;
 His mynde is on fleshly lustes, and his treasure ;
 And grete payne it shall cause him to endure
 Before the Lorde heven kynge. —

Every-man, stande styll : whyder art thou goynge
 Thus gayly ? hast thou thy maker forgete ?

Every-man.

Why askest thou ?
 Woldest thou wete ?

Detbe.

Ye, syr, I wyll shewe you ;
 In grete haste I am sende to the
 Fro God out of his mageste.

Every-man.

What, sente to me !

Detbe.

Ye, certaynly :
 Thoughe thou have forgete hym here,
 He thynketh on the in the hevenly spere ;
 As, or we departe, thou shalt knowe.

Every-man,

What desyreth God of me ?

Detbe.

That shall I shewe thee ;
 A rekenynge he wyll nedes have
 Without any lenger respite.

Every-man.

To gyve a rekenynge longer layser I crave ;
 This blynde mater troubleth my wytte.

Detbe.

On the thou must take a longe journey,
 Therefore thy boke of counte with the thou brynge,

For tourne agayne thou can not by no waye:
 And loke, thou be sure of thy rekenynge;
 For before God thou shalte answere and shewe
 Thy many badde dedes, and good but a fewe,
 How thou hast spent thy lyfe, and in what wise,
 Before the chefe lord of paradyse
 Have I do we were in that waye,
 For, wete thou well, thou shalte make none attournay.

Every-man.

Full unredy I am suche rekenynge to gyve:
 I know the not; what messenger art thou?

Detbe.

I am *Detbe*, that no man dredeth;
 For every man I reite, and no man spareth,
 For it is Goddes commaundement
 That all to me sholde be obedyent.

Every-man.

O *Detbe*, thou comest when I had the leest in mynde:
 In thy power it lyeth me to save;
 Yet of my good wyl I gyve the, if thou wyl be kynde,
 Ye a thousande pounde shalte thou have,
 And dyfferre this mater tyl another daye.

Detbe.

Every-man, it may not be by no waye;
 I set not by golde, sylver, nor rycheffe,
 Ne by pope, emperour, kyng, duke, ne prynces;
 For, and I wolde receyve gyftes grete,
 All the worlde I might gete;
 But my custome is clene contrary:
 I gyve the no respyte, come hens, and not tary.

Every-man.

Alas, shall I have no lenger respyte?
 I may saye, *Detbe* gyveth no warnynge:
 To thynke on the it maketh my herte seke;
 For all unredy is my boke of rekenynge:
 But xii yere and I myght have abydynge,
 My countynge boke I wolde make so clere,
 That my rekenynge I sholde net nede to fere.

Wherefore,

Wherefore, *Deib*, I praye the for Goddes mercy,
Spare me tyll I be provyded of remedy.

Deibe.

The avayleth not to crye, wepe, and praye:
But hast the lyghtly that thou were gone this journaye:
And preve thy frendes yf thou can;
For, wete thou well, the tyde abydeyth no man,
And in the worlde eche lyvyng creature
For *Adam's* synne must dye of nature.

Every-man.

Deibe, yf I sholde this plygrymage take,
And my rekenyngue fuerly make,
Shewe me, for saint *Charite*,
Sholde I not come agayne shortly?

Deibe.

No, *Every-man*, and thou be ones there,
Thou mayst never more come here,
Trust me veryly.

Every-man.

O gracious God in the hye sete celestyall,
Have mercy on me in this moost nede. —
Shall I have no company fro this vale terrestriall
Of myne acqueynce that way me to lede?

Deibe.

Ye, if ony be so hardy,
That wolde go with the, and bere the company:
Hye the that thou were gone to Goddes magnyfycence,
Thy rekenyngue to gyve before his presence.
What, weneest thou thy lyve is gyven the,
And thy worldely goodes also?

Every-man.

I had wende so veryle.

Deibe.

Nay, naye; it was but lende the,
For as soone as thou art go,
Another a whyle shall have it, and than go thet fro,
Even as thou hast done.

Every-man,

Every-man, thou arte made, thou hast thy wyttes fyve;
And here on erthe wyll not amende thy lyve;
For sodenely I do come.

Every-man.

O wretched caytyfe, wheder shall I flee,
That I myght scape this endles sorowe! —
Now, gentyll *Dethe*, spare me tyll to morowe,
That I may amende me
With good advysement.

Dethe.

Naye, therto I wyll not consent,
Nor no man wyll I respyte;
But to the herte sodeynly I shall smyte
Without ony advysement.
And now out of thy syght I wyll me hy;
Se, thou make the redy shortely,
For thou mayst saye, this is the daye
That no man lyvyng may scape a waye.

Every-man.

Alas! I may well wepe with syghes depe:
Now have I no maner of company
To helpe me in my journey, and me to kepe;
And also my wrytynge is full unredy.
How shall I do now for to excuse me!
I wolde to God, I had never begete;
To my foule a fulle grete profyte it had be;
For now I fere paynes huge and grete.
The tyme passeth: — Lorde, helpe that all wrought;
For though I mourne it awayleth nought:
The day passeth, and is almost ago;
I wote not well what for to do.
To whome were I best my complaynt to make?
What, and I to *Felawshyp* therof spake,
And shewed hym of this sodeyne chaunce!
For in hym is all myne affyaunce;
We have in the worlde so many a daye
Be good frendes in sporte and playe.

I se hym yonder certaynely;
I trust, that he will bere me company,
Therefore to hym wyll I speke to ese my sorowe.
Well mette, good *Felawshyp*; and good morowe.

Felawshyp speketh.

Every-man, good morowe by this day:
Syr, why lokest thou so pyteously?
If ony thyng be a mysse, I praye the, me saye,
That I may helpe to remedy.

Every-man.

Ye, good *Felawshyp*, ye;
I am in greate jeoparde.

Felawshyp.

My true frende, shewe to me your mynde;
I wyll not forsake the to my lyves ende,
In the waye of good company.

Every-man.

That was well spoken, and lovyngly.

Felawshyp.

Syr, I must nedes knowe your hevynesse;
I have pyte to se you in ony dystresse:
If ony have you wronged ye shall revenged be,
Though I on the grounde be slayne for the,
Though that I knowe before that I sholde dye.

Every-man.

Veryly, *Felawshyp*, gramercy.

Felawshyp.

Tushe! by thy thanks I set not a strawe;
Shewe me your grefe, and saye no more.

Every-man.

If I my herte sholde to you breke,
And than you to tourne your mynde fro me,
And wolde not me comforte whan yē here me speke,
Than sholde I tentymes foryer be.

Felawshyp.

Syr, I say as I wyll do in dede.

Every-man.

Every-man.

Than be you a good frende at nede;
I have founde you true here before.

Fellowship.

And so ye shall evermore;
For, in fayth, and thou go to hell,
I wyll not forsake the by the waye.

Every-man.

Ye speke lyke a good frende, I bylove you well;
I shall deserve it and I maye.

Fellowship.

I speke of no deservynge, by this daye;
For he that wyll saye and nothyng do,
Is not worthy with good company to go:
Therefore shewe me the greife of your mynde,
As to your frende moost lovyng and kynde.

Every-man.

I shall shewe you how it is
Commaunded, I am to go a journaie,
A longe waye, harde and daungerous;
And gyve a straye counte without delaye
Before the hye judge *Adonay*:
Wherfore I pray you, bere me company,
As ye have promysed in this journaie.

Fellowship.

That is mater in dede; promyse is duty,
But and I sholde take suche a vyage on me,
I knowe it well it sholde be to my payne:
Also it make me aserde certayne.
But let us take counsell here as well as we can,
For your wordes wolde fere a stronge man.

Every-man.

Why, ye sayd — If I had nede,
Ye wolde me never forsake quycke ne deed,
Thoughe it were to hell truly.

* Adonai. One of the names of God; it is the plural of Adoni, which signifies Lord.

Fellowship.

Fellowship.

So I sayd certaynely;
But fuche pleasures be set asyde, the fothie to saye,
And also yf we toke fuche a journaye,
Whan sholde we come agayne?

Every-man.

Naye, never agayne tyll the daye of dome.

Fellowship.

In fayth, than wyll not I come there:
Who hath your thesē tydynges brought?

Every-man.

In dede, *Detb* was with me here.

Fellowship.

Now, by God that alle hathe bought,
If *Detb* were the messenger,
For no man that is lyvyngē to daye
I wyll not go that lothe journaye,
Not for the fader that bygate me.

Every-man.

Ye promysed other wyse, parde.

Fellowship.

I wote well I say so truely,
And yet if thou wylte etc and drynke, and make good
chere,
Or haunt to women the lusty company,
I wolde not forsake you whyle the daye is clere,
Trust me veryly.

Every-man.

Ye, therto ye wolde be redy;
To go to myrthe, solas, and playe,
Your mynde wyll sooner apply
Than to bere me company in my longe journaye.

Fellowship.

Now, in good fayth, I wyll not that way;
But and thou wyll murder, or ony man kyll,
In that I wyll helpe thee with a good wyll.

Every-man.

Every-man.

O, that is a symple advyse in dede:
 Gentyll *Felawe*, help me in my necessity;
 We have loved longe, and now I nede,
 And now, gentyll *Felawshyp*, remembre me.

Felawshyp.

Wheder ye have loved me or no,
 By saynt *John*, I wyll not with the go.

Every-man.

Yet I pray the, take the labour, and do so moche for
 me,
 To brynge me forwarde, for saint *Charyte*,
 And comforte me tyll I come without the towne.

Felawshyp.

Nay, and thou wolde gyve me a new gowne,
 I wyll not a fote with the go;
 But and thou had taryed, I wolde not have left the so:
 And as now, God spede the in thy journeye!
 For from the I wyll departe as fast as I maye.

Every-man.

Wheder awaye, *Felawshyp*? will you forsake me?

Felawshyp.

Ye, by my faye; to God I be take the.

Every-man.

Farewell, good *Felawshyp*; for this my herte is fore:
 A dewe for ever, I shall se the no more.

Felawshyp.

In fayth, *Every-man*, fare well now at the ende;
 For you I wyll remembre that partynge is mournynge.

Every-man.

Alacke! shall we this departe in dede?
 A! Lady, helpe, without ony more comforte,
 Lo, *Felawshyp* forsaketh me in my moost nede:
 For helpe in this worlde wheder shall I resorte?
Felawshyp here before with me wolde mery make;
 And now lytell sorowe for me dooth he take.
 It is sayd, in prosperyte men frendes may fynde,
 Whiche in adverfyte be full unkynde.

Now

Now wheder for focoure shall I flee,
 Syth that *Felawshyp* hath forsaken me?
 To my kynnesmen I wyll truly,
 Prayenge them to helpe me in my necessyte;
 I byleve, that they wyll do so;
 For kynde wyll crepe where it may not go.
 I wyll go saye; for yonder I se them go:—
 Where be ye now, my frendes and kynnesmen?

Kynrede.

Here be we now at your commaundement:
Cosyn, I praye you, shewe us your entent
 In ony wise, and not spare.

Cosyn.

Ye, *Every-man*, and to us declare
 If ye be disposed to go ony whyder;
 For, wete you well wyll lyve and dye to gyder,

Kynrede.

In welth, and wo, we wyll with you holde; 1
 For over his kynne a man may be bolde. 2

Every-man.

Gramercy, my frendes and kynnesmen kynde;
 Now shall I shewe you the grefe of my mynde.
 I was commaunded by a messenger,
 That is a hie kynges chiefe offycer;
 He bad me go a pylgrymage to my payne,
 And, I knowe well, I shall never come agayne:
 Also I must gyve a rekenynge strayte;
 For I have a grete enemy that hath me in wayte,
 Whiche entendeth me for to hynder.

Kynrede.

What a counte is that whiche ye must render?
 That wolde I knowe.

Every-man.

Of all my workes I must shewe,
 How I have lyved, and my dayes spent;

1 bolde. 2 bolde.

Also

Also of yll dedes that I have used
 In my tyme syth lyfe was me lent,
 And of all vertues that I have refused:
 Therefore I praye you, go thyder with me
 To helpe to make myn accounte, for saint *Charyte*.

Cosyn.

What, to go thyder? Is that the mater?
 Nay, *Every-man*, I had lever fast brede and water,
 All this fyve yere and more.

Every-man.

Alas, that ever I was bore!
 For now shall I never be mery,
 If that you forsake me.

Kynrede.

A, syr; what, ye be a mery man:
 Take good herte to you, and make no mone.
 But one thyng I warne you, by saynt *Anne*,
 As for me ye shall go alone.

Every-man.

My *Cosyn*, wyll you not with me go?

Cosyn.

No, by our Lady, I have the crampe in my to:
 Trust not to me; for, so God me spede,
 I wyll deceyve you in your moost nede.

Kynrede.

It avayleth not us to tyste:
 Ye shall have my mayde, with all my herte;
 She loveth to go to feesles there to be nyse,
 And to daunce, and a brode to sterre:
 I wyll gyve her leve to helpe you in that journey,
 If that you and she may agree.

Every-man.

Now shewe me the very effecte of your mynde;
 Wyll you go with me, or abyde be hynde?

Kynrede.

Abyde behynde! ye, that wyll I and I maye;
 Therefore farewell tyll another daye.

Every-man.

Every-mān.

Howe sholde I be mery or gladdē?
For fayre promyses men to me make;
But, when I have moost nede, they me forsake;
I am deceyved, that maketh me sadde.

Cofyn.

Cofyn *Every-man*, farewell now;
For, verily, I wyll not go with you:
Also of myne owne an unredy rekenynge
I have to accounte, therefore I make taryenge;
Now God kepe the, for now I go.

Every-man.

A, *Jesus*, is all come here to?
Lo, fayre wordes maketh fooles fayne;
They promyse, and nothyng wyll do certayne.
My kynnesmen promysed me saythfully,
For to abyde with me stedfastly;
And now fast a waye do they flee:
Even so *Felawship* promysed me.
What frende were best me of to provyde?
I lose my time here longer to abyde;
Yet in my mynde a thyng there is, —
All my lyfe I have loved ryches;
If that my good now helpe me myght,
He wolde make my herte full lyght:
I wyll speke to hym in this distresse. —
Where arte thou, my *Gooddes*, and ryches?

Goodes.

Who calleth me? *Every-man*? what hast thou haste?
I lye here in corners trusted and pyled so hye,
And in chestes I am locked so fast,
Also sacked in bagges, thou mayst se with thyn eye,
I can not fyre; in packes lowe I lye:
What wolde ye have, lightly me faye.

Every-man.

Come hyder, *Good*, in al the hast thou may;
For of counseyll I must desyre the.

Goodes.

Syr, and ye in the worlde have sorowe or aduersyte,
That can I helpe you to remedy shortly.

Every-man.

It is another dysease that greveth me;
In this world it is not, I tell thee so,
I am sent for an other way to go,
To gyve a straye counte generall
Before the hyest *Jupiter* of all:
And all my life I have had joye and pleasure in the,
Therefore I pray the go with me;
For, paraventure, thou mayst before God almighty
My rekenynge helpe to clene and purysye,
For it is saide ever amonge
That money maketh all ryght that is wronge.

Goodes.

Nay, *Every-man*, I synge an other songe;
I folowe no man in suche vyages,
For, and I wente with the,
Thou sholdes fare moche the worse for me:
For bycause on me thou dyd set thy mynde,
Thy rekenynge I have made blotted and blynde,
That thyne accounte thou can not make truly;
And that hast thou for the love of me.

Every-man.

That wolde greve me full sore,
Whan I sholde come to that feresfull answer:
Up, let us go thyder togyder.

Goodes.

Nay, not so; I am to brytell, I may not endure:
I wyll folowe no man one fote be ye sure.

i go omitted.

Every-man.

Every-man.

Alas, I have the loved, and had grete pleasure
All my lyfe dayes on good and treasure.

Goodes.

That is to thy dampnacyon without lesynge,
For my love is contrary to the love everlastynge;
But yf thou had me loved moderately durynge,
As, to the poore gyve parte of me,
Than sholdest thou not in this dolour be,
Nor in this grete sorowe and care.

Every-man.

Lo, now was I deceyved or I was ware,
And all I may wyte my spendynge of tyme.

Goodes.

What, weneft thou that I am thync?

Every-man.

I had went † so.

Goodes.

Naye, *Every-man*, I saye no:
As for a whyle I was lente the;
A season thou hast had me in prosperyte;
My condycyon is mannes soule to kyll,
If I save one a thousande I do spyll:
Weneft thou that I wyll folowe the?
Nay, fro this worlde not veryle.

Every-man.

I had wende otherwyse.

Goodes.

Therefore to thy soule *Good* is a thefe,
For whan thou arte deed, this is my gyse,
Another to deceyve in this same wyse,
As I have done the, and all to his soules represe,

Every-man.

O false *Good*, cursed thou be,
Thou traytour to God that hast deceyved me,

† i. e. wend.

And caught I me in thy snare.

Goodes.

Mary, thou brought thy self in care,
Wherof I am gladde,
I must nedes laugh, I can not be sadde.

Every-man.

A, *Good*, thou hast had longe my hertely love;
I gave the that whiche sholde be the Lordes above:
But wylte thou not go with me in dede?
I pray the trowth to saye.

Goodes.

No, so God me spede;
Therefore fare well, and have good daye.

Every-man.

O, to whome shall I make my mone!
For, to go with me in that hevy journeye,
Fyrst, *Felawshyp* sayd, he wolde with me gone;
His wordes were very pleasaunt and gaye,
But afterwarde he lefte me alone.
Than spake I to my kynnesmen all in dyspayre,
And also they gave me wordes fayre,
They lacked no fayre spekyng;
But all forsake me in the endyng.
Than wente I to my *Goodes* that I loved best,
In hope to have comforte; but there had I leest:
For my *Goodes* sharpely dyd me tell,
That he bryngeth many in to hell.
Than of myself I was ashamed,
And so I am worthy to be blamed:
Thus may I wel my selfe hate.
Of whome shall I now counsell take?
I thinke, that I shall never spede,
Tyll that I go to my *Good-Dede*;
But, alas! she is so weke,
That she can nother go nor speke:

I laugh

in

Yet

Yet wyll I venter on her now.
My *Good-Dedes*, where be you?

Good-dedes.

Here I lye colde in the ground;
Thy synnes hath me sore bounde,
That I can not stete.

Every-man.

O *Good-dedes*, I stande in fere;
I must you praye of counseyll,
For helpe now sholde come ryght well.

Good-dedes.

Every-man, I have understandynge,
That ye be somoneth a counte to make
Before *Mysias* of *Jherusalem* kynge,
And you do by me that journey what you wyll I take.

Every-man.

Therefore I come to you thy moone to make:
I praye you, that ye wyll go with me.

Good-dedes.

I wolde full fayne, but I can not stande veryly.

Every-man.

Why, is there ony thyng of you fall?

Good-dedes.

Ye, sir, I may thanke you of all;
If ye had parfytely chered me,
Your boke of counte full redy had be.
Loke, the bokes of your workes and dedes etc;
A, se how they lye under the fete,
To your soules hevyns.

Every-man.

Our Lorde *Jesus* helpe me,
For one letter here I cannot se.

Good-dedes.

There is a blynde rekenynge in tyme of dystres.

Every-man.

Good-dedes, I praye you, helpe me in this nede,
Or elles I am for ever dampned in dede;

Therfore helpe me to make rekenynge
Before the redemer of all thyng,
That kynge is, and was, and ever shall.

Good-dedes.

Every-man, I am fory of your fall,
And fayne wolde I helpe you and I were able.

Every-man.

Good-dedes, your counseyll I pray you give me.

Good-dedes.

That shall I do verily:
Thoughe that on my fete I may not go,
I have a syster that shall with you also,
Called *Knowlege*, whiche shall with you abide,
To helpe you to make that dredeful rekenynge.

Knowlege.

Every-man I wyll go with thee, and be thy guide,
In thy moost nede to go by thy syde.

Every-man.

In good condycyon I am now in every thyng,
And am hole content with this good thyng,
Thanked by God my creature.¹

Good-dedes.

And whan he hath brought you there,
Where thou shalt hele the of thy smarte,
Than go you with your rekenynge and your good dedes
togyder,
For to make you joyfull at herte.
Before the blessed Trynnye.

Every-man.

My *Good-dedes*, gramercy;
I am well content certaynly
With your wordes swete.

Knowlege.

Now go we togyder lovyngly
To *Confessyon*, that clenfyng ryvere.

¹ *Thanked be God my creator. Quere.*

Every-man.

Every-man.

For joy I wepe: I wolde we were there;
 But, I pray you, gyve me cognicyon,
 Where dwelleth that holy man *Confessyon*?

Knowlege.

In the hous of salvacyon;
 We shall fynde hym in that place,
 That shall us comforte by Goddes grace.—
 Lo, this is *Confessyon*: knele downe, and aske mercy;
 For he is in good conceyte with God almyghty.

Every-man.

O glorious fountayne that all unclenenes doth claryfy,
 Washe fro me the spottes of vyce unclene,
 That on me no synne may be sene;
 I come with *Knowlege* for my redempcyon,
 Redempte with herte and full contrycyon,
 For I am commaunded a pylgrymage to take,
 And grete accountes before God to make.
 Now I pray you, *Sbryste*, moder of salvacyon,
 Helpe my good dedes for my pyteous exclamacyon.

Confessyon.

I knowe your sorrowe well, *Every-man*:
 Bycause with *Knowlege* ye come to me,
 I wyll you comforte as well as I can;
 And a precyous jewell I wyll gyve the,
 Called penaunce, voyce voyder of adversyte:
 Therwith shall your body chastyfied be
 With abstynence and perseveraunce in Goddes servyce;
 Here shall you receyve that scourge of me,
 Whiche is penaunce stronge that ye must endure,
 To remembre thy Savyour was scourged for the
 With sharpe scourges, and suffred it pacyently:
 So must thou, or thou scape that painful pylgrymage.—
Knowlege, kepe hym in this vyage,
 And by that tyme *Good-dedes* wyll be with the;
 But in ony wyse be seker of mercy,
 For your tyme draweth fast; and ye wyll saved be,
 Aske God mercy, and he wyll graunte truly:

When

Whan with the scourge of penaunce man doth hym
bynde,

The oyle of-forgyvenes than shall he fynde.

Every-man.

Thanked be God for his gracyous werke ;
For now I wyll my penaunce begyn :
This hath rejoyced and lyghted my herte,
Though the knottes be paynful and harde within.

Knowledge.

Every-man, loke your penaunce that ye fulfyll,
What payne that ever it to you be ;
And *Knowledge* shall gyve you counceyll at wyll,
How your accounte ye shall make clerely.

Every-man.

O eternal God, o hevenly fygure,
O way of ryghtwysnes, o goodly vyfyon,
Which dyscended downe in a vyrgyne pure
Bycause he wolde *Every-man* redeme,
Which *Adam* forfayted by his disobedyence,
O bleffyd Godheed electe and hye devyne,
Forgyve my grevous offence ;
Here I crye the mercy in this presence :
O ghostly treasure, o raunsomer and redemer
Of all the worlde, hope and conduyter,
Myrrour of joye, foundatour of mercy,
Whiche enlumyneth heven and erth therby,
Here my clamorous complaynt, though it late be,
Receyve my prayers ; unworthy in this hevy lyfe
Though I be, a synner most abhomynable,
Yet let my name be wryten in *Moyfes* table. —
O *Mary*, praye to the maker of all thyng
Me for to helpe at my endyng,
And save me fro the power of my enemy ;
For *Deib* assayleth me strongly :
And, Lady, that I may by meane of thy prayer
Of your sones glory to be partynere,

By the meanes of his passyon, I it crave;
I beseeche you, helpe my soule to save.—
Knowledge, gyve me the scourge of penance,
My fleshe therewith shall gyve acqweyntance;
I wyll now begyn, yf God gyve me grace.

Knowledge.

Every-man, God gyve you tyme and space:
Thus I bequeth you in the handes of our savour;
Now may you make your rekenynge sure.

Every-man.

In the name of the holy Trynyte,
My body sore punysshed shall be,
Take this body for the synne of the fleshe;
Also thou delytest to go gay and freshe;
And in the way of dampnacyon thou dyd me brynge,
Therefore suffre now strokes of punysshynge:
Now of penance I wyll wade the water clere,
To save me from purgatory that sharpe fyre.

Good-dedes.

I thanke God, now I can walke and go,
And am delyvered of my sykenesse and wo;
Therefore with *Every-man* I wyll go, and not spare,
His good workes I wyll helpe hym to declare.

Knowledge.

Now, *Every-man*, Be mery and glad;
Your *Good-dedes* cometh now, ye may not be sad;
Now is your *Good-dedes* hole and founde,
Goynge upryght upon the grounde.

Every-man.

My herte is lyght, and shall be evermore;
Now wyll I smyte faster than I dyde before.

Good-dedes.

Every-man pylgryme, my special frende,
Blessyd be thou without ende;
For the is preparate the eternal glory:
Ye have me made hole and founde,
Therefore I will byde by the in every founde.

Every-man

Every-man.

Welcome, my *Good-dedes*, now I here thy voyce
I wepe for verry swetenes of love.

Knowledge.

Be no more sad, but ever rejoyce,
God seeth thy lyvyng in his trone above;
Put on his garment to thy behove,
Whiche is wette with your teres,
Or elles before God you may it mysse,
Whan ye to your journeyes ende come shall.

Every-man.

Gentyll *Knowledge*, what do ye it call?

Knowledge.

It is a garment of sorowe,
Fro payne it wyll you borowe;
Contrycyon it is,
That getteth forgyvenes,
He pleafeth God passyng well.

Good-dedes.

Every-man, wyll you were it for your hele?

Every-man.

Now blessyd be *Jesu*, *Maryes* sone;
For now have I on true contrycyon;
And lette us go now without taryenge. —
Good-dedes, have we clere our rekenyng?

Good-dedes.

Ye, indede, I have here.

Every-man.

Than I trust we nede not fere: —
Now, frendes, let us not parte in twayne.

Kynrede.

Nay, *Every-man*, that wyll we not certayne.

Good-dedes.

Yet must thou led with the
Thre perfonnes of grete myght.

Every-man.

Who sholde they be?

Good-dedes.

Good-dedes.

Dyscrecyon and *Strength* they hyght,
And thy *Beaute* may not abyde behynde,

Knowlege.

Also ye must call to mynde
Your *Fyve-wyttes* as for your counseylours.

Good-dedes.

You must have them ready at all houres.

Every-man.

Howe shall I gette them hyder?

Kynrede.

You must call them all togyder,
And they wyll here you in contynent.

Every-man.

My frendes, come hyder, and be present,
Dyscrecyon, *Strength*, my *Fyve-wyttes* † and *Beaute*.

Beaute.

Here at your wyll we be all redy;
What wyll ye that we sholde do?

Good-dedes.

That ye wolde with *Every-man* go,
And helpe hym in his pylgrymage:
Advyse you, wyll ye with him or not in that vyage?

Strength.

We wyll brynge hym all thyder
To his helpe and comferte, ye may byleve me.

Dyscrecyon.

So wyll we go with hym all togyder,

Every-man.

Almyghty God, loved myght thou be;
I gyve the laude that I have hyder brought
Strength, *Dyscrecyon*, *Beaute*, *Fyve-wyttes*, lacke I nought:

† *Fyve-wyttes*, i. e. the Five Senses. These are frequently exhibited as five distinct personages upon the Spanish stage; (see Riccoboni, p. 98.) but our moralist has represented them all by one character. In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, the Madman says, "Bless thy five Wits!" meaning the Five Senses.
P.

And

And my *Good-dedes*, with *Knowledge* clere,
All be in my company at my wyll here;
I desyre no more to my besynes.

Strengths.

And I *Strength* wyll by you stande in dystres,
Though thou wolde in batayle fyght on the grounde.

Fyve-wyttes.

And though it were thurgh the worlde rounde,
We wyll not departe for swete ne soure.

Beaute.

No more wyll I unto dethes houre,
Watsoever therof befall.

Dyscrecyon.

Every-man, advyse you fyrst of all,
Go with a good advysement and delyberacyon:
We all gyve you vertuous monycyon,
That all shall be well.

Every-man.

My frendes, harken what I wyll tell;
I praye God rewarde you in his heven spere;
Now herken all that be here;
For I wyll make my testament
Herẽ before you all present:
In almes, halfe my good I wyll gyve with my handes
twayne,
In the way of charyte, with good entent,
And the other halfe styll shall remayne,
In queth to be retourned there it ought to be.
This I do in despyte of the fende of hell,
To go quyte out of his perell
Ever after and this daye.

Knowledge.

Every-man, herken what I saye;
Go to presthode I you advyse,
And receyve of hym in any wyse
The holy sacrament and oyntement togyder,
Than shortly se, ye tourne agayne hyder,
We wyll all abyde you here.

Fyve-wyttes.

Fyve-wyttes.

Ye, *Every-man*, hye you that ye redy were :
 There is no emperour, kynge, duke, ne baron,
 That of God hath commycyon,
 As hath the leest preest in the worlde beygne;
 For of the bleffyd sacramentes pure and benygne
 He bereth the keyes, and therof hath the cure
 For mannes redempcyon, it is ever sure,
 Whiche God for our soules medycyne
 Gave us oute of his herte with grete payne,
 Here in this transytory lyfe for the and me :
 The bleffyd sacramentes, VII there be,
 Baptym, confyrmacyon, with preesthode good,
 And the sacrament of Goddes precyous fleshe and blood,
 Maryage, the holy extreme unccyon, and penaunce;
 These seven be good to have in remembraunce,
 Gracyous sacramentes of hye devynyte.

Every-man.

Fayne wolde I receyve that holy body;
 And mekely to my ghosly fader I wyll go.

Fyve-wyttes.

Every-man, that is the best that ye can do;
 God wyll you to salvacyon brynge,
 For preesthode excedeth all other thyng;
 To us holy scrpyture they do teche,
 And converteth man fro synne heven to reche;
 God hath to them more power gyven
 Than to ony aungell that is in heven :
 With V wordes he may consecrate
 Goddes body in fleshe and blode to make,
 And handeeth his maker bytwene his handes,
 The preest byndeth and unbyndeth all bandes
 Bothe in erthe and in heven, —
 Thou mynyfres all the sacramentes seven,
 Though we kyffe thy fete thou were worthy,
 Thou art surgyon that cureth synne deedly,

i bands

No

No remedy we fynde under God,

But all onely preefhode.

Every-man, God gave preeft that dygnyte,
And setteth them in his stede amonge us to be;
Thus be they above aungelles in degree.

Knowledge.

If preeftes be good it is so fuerly,
But whan *Jesu* hanged on the crosse with grete smarte,
There he gave out of his bleffyd herte
The same sacrament in grete tourment,
He solde them not to us that Lorde omnypotent,
Therefore saynt *Peter* the apostell dothe saye,
That *Jesus* curse hath all they
Whiche God theyr sayour do by or sell,
Or they for any money do take or tell,
Synfull preeftes gyveth the synners example bad,
Theyr chyl dren sytteth by other mennes fyres I have
harde,

And some haunteth womens company,
With unclene lyfe as lustes of lechery;
These be with synne made blynde.

Five-wyttes.

I trust to God, no suche may we fynde :
Therefore let us preefhode honour,
And folowe theyr doctryne for our soules socoure;
We be theyr shepe, and they shepeherdes be,
By whome we all be kepte in fuerthe. —
Peas! for yonder I see *Every-man* come,
Whiche hath made true satysfaccyon.

Good-dedes.

Me thynke, it is he in dede.

Every-man.

Now *Jesu* be your alder spede!
I have receyved the sacrament for my redempcyon,
And than myne extreme unccyon;
Blessyd be all they that counfeyled me to take it:
And now, frendes, let us go without longer respyte;

I thanke

I thanke God, that ye have taryed so longe.
Now set eche of you on this rodde your honde;
And shortely folowe me;
I go before there I wolde be: God be your gyde.

Strength.

Every-man, we wyll not fro you go,
Tyll ye have done this vyage longe.

Dyscrecion.

I *Dyscrecion* wyll byde by you also.

Knowledge.

And though this pylgrymage be never so stronge,
I wyll never parte you fro:

Every-man, I wyll be as sure by the,
As ever I dyde by *Judas Machabee*.

Every-man.

Alas! I am so faynt I may not stande,
My lymmes under me doth folde:
Frendes, let us not tourne agayne to this lande,
Not for all the worldes golde;
For in to this cave must I crepe,
And tourne to erth and there to slepe.

Beaute.

What, in to this grave? Alas!

Every-man.

Ye, there shall ye consume more and lesse.

Beaute.

And what, sholde I smoder here?

Every-man.

Ye, by my fayth, and never more appere;
In this worlde lyve no more we shall,
But in heven before the hiest Lorde of all.

Beaute.

I crosse out all this: adewe, by saynt *Johan*;
I take my tappe in my lappe, and am gone.

Every-man.

What, *Beaute*? whyder wyll ye?

Beaute.

Beaute.

Peas! I am dese, I loke not behynde me,
Not and thou woldest gyve me all the golde in thy cheff.

Every-man.

Alas! wherto may I truſte?
Beaute gothe faſt awaye fro me,
She promyſed with me to lyve and dye.

Strength.

Every-man, I wyll the alſo forſake and denye,
Thy game lyketh me not at all.

Every-man.

Why than ye wyll forſake me all:
Swete *Strength*, tary a lytell ſpace.

Strength.

Nay, fir, by the rode of grace,
I wyll hye me from the faſt,
Though thou wepe to thy heart to braſt.

Every-man.

Ye wolde ever byde by me, ye ſayd.

Strength.

Ye, I have you ferre ynoughe conveyde:
Ye be olde ynoughe, I underſtande,
Your pylgrymage to take on hande;
I repent me, that I hyder came.

Every-man.

Strength, you to dyspleaſe I am to blame;
Wyll ye breke promyſe that is dette?

Strength.

In fayth, I care not:
Thou art but a foole to complayne;
You ſpende your ſpeche, and waſte your brayne:
Go, thryſt the in to the grounde.

Every-man.

I had wende furer I ſholde you have founde:
He that truſteth in his *Strength*,
She hym deceyveth at the length;

Both

EVERY-MAN.

55

Bothe *Strength* and *Beaute* forsaketh me,
Yet they promysed me fayre and lovyngly.

Dyscrecyon.

Every-man, I wyll after *Strength* be gone;
As for me I wyll leve you alone.

Every-man.

Why, *Dyscrecyon*, wyll ye forsake me?

Dyscrecyon.

Ye, in fayth, I wyll go fro the;
For whan *Strength* goth before,
I folowe after ever more.

Every-man.

Yet, I pray the, for the love of the Trynyte,
Loke in my grave ones pyteously.

Dyscrecyon.

Nay, so nye wyll I not come.
Fare well everychone.

Every-man.

O, all thyng fayleth, save God alone,
Beaute, *Strength*, and *Dyscrecyon*;
For, whan *Deith* bloweth his blast,
They all renne fro me full fast.

Fyve-wyttes.

Every-man, my leve now of the I take;
I wyll folowe the other, for here I the forsake.

Every-man.

Alas! than may I wayle and wepe;
For I toke you for my best frende.

Fyve-wyttes.

I wyll no lenger the kepe:
Now farewell, and there an ende.

Every-man.

O *Jesu*, helpe! all hath forsaken me.

Good-dedes.

Nay, *Every-man*, I wyll byde with the;
I wyll not forsake the in dede;
Thou shalt fynde me a good frende at nede.

Every-man.

Gramercy, *Good-dedes*, now may I true frendes se;
They have forsaken me everychone,
Knowlege, wyll ye forsake me also?

Knowlege.

Ye, *Every-man*, whan ye to deth shall go;
But not yet for no maner of daunger.

Every-man.

Gramercy, *Knowlege*, with all my herte.

Knowlege.

Nay, yet I wyll not from hens departe,
Tyll I see where ye shall be come.

Every-man.

Me thynke, alas! that I must be gone
To make my rekenynge, and my dettes paye;
For, I se, my tyme is nye spent awaye. —
Take example, all ye that this do here or se,
How they that I love best do forsake me;
Excepte my *Good-dedes*, that bydeth truly.

Good-dedes.

All erthly thynges is but vanyte,
Beaute, *Strength*, and *Dyscrecyon*, do man forsake,
Folyshe frendes, and kynnesmen, that fayre spake;
All fleeth save *Good-dedes*, and that am I.

Every-man.

Have mercy on me, God moost mighty, —
And stande by me thou moder and mayde, holy *Mary*.

Good-dedes.

Fere not, I wyll speke for the.

Every-man.

Here I crye God mercy.

Good-dedes.

Shorte our ende and mynyshe our payne:
Let us go, and never come agayne.

Every-man.

In to thy handes, Lorde, my soule I commende,

Receyve

Receyve it, Lorde, that it be not lost;
As thou me boughtest, so me defende,
And save me from the fendes boost,
That I may appere with that bleffyd hooft
That shall be saved at the day of dome:
(*In manus tuas*) — of myghtes mooft
For ever — (*commendo spiritum meum.*)

Knowledge.

Now hath he suffred that we all shall endure,
The *Good-dedes* shall make all sure;
Now hath he made endyng: —
Me thynketh that I here aungelles synge,
And make grete joy and melody,
Where every mannes soule receyved shall be.

The Aungell.

Come, excellent electe spouse to *Jesu*,
Here above thou shalt go,
Bycause of thy synguler vertue:
Now the soule is taken the body fro;
Thy rekenyng is crystill clere;
Now shalte thou in to the heavenly spere,
Unto the whiche all ye shall come
That lyveth well before the daye of dome.

DoBour.

This morall men may have in mynde;
Ye herets, take it of worth olde and yonge,
And forsake pryde, for he deceyveth you in the ende,
And remembre *Beaute*, *Fyve-wyttes*, *Strength*, and

Discrecyon,

They all at the last do *Every-man* forsake,
Save his *Good-dedes*; there doth he take:
But be ware, and they be small,
Before God he hath no helpe at all;
None excuse may be there for *Every-man*:
Alas! how shall he do than;
For after dethe amendes may no man make;
For than mercy and pyte doth hym forsake;

If his rekenyng be not cleane whan he doth come,
 God wyll saye — *Ite, maledicti, in ignem eternum:*
 And he that hath his accounte hole and sounde,
 Hye in heven he shall be crounde;
 Unto whiche place God bringe us all thyder,
 That we may lyve body and soule togyder;
 Therto helpe the Trynyte:
 Amen saye ye, for saynt *Charyte*.

F I N I S.

Thus endeth this morall playe of *Every-man*.
 Imprynted at *London* in *Poules*
 chyrche yarde by me
John Skot.



HYCKE-SCORNER.

A

M O R A L I T Y.

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HYCK-SCORNER—

—is printed from a black letter copy in Mr. Garrick's collection; of which the following is a very accurate analysis, extracted from Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poetry*. Vol. 1. P. 130.

“Hyck-Scorner bears no distant resemblance to comedy: its chief aim seems to be to exhibit characters and manners, its plot being much less regular than the foregoing. The prologue is spoken by Pity, represented under the character of an aged pilgrim; he is joined by Contemplation and Perseverance, two holy men, who after lamenting the degeneracy of the age, declare their resolution of stemming the torrent. Pity then is left upon the stage, and presently found by Frewyll, representing a lewd debauchee, who, with his dissolute companion Imagination, relate their manner of life, and not without humour describe the stews and other places of base resort. They are presently joined by Hyck-Scorner, who is drawn as a libertine returned from travel, and agreeably to his name scoffs at religion. These three are described as extremely vicious, who glory in every act of wickedness: at length two of them quarrel, and Pity endeavours to part the fray: on this they fall upon him, put him into the stocks, and then leave him. Pity then descants in a kind of lyric measure on the profligacy of the age, and in this situation is found by Perseverance and Contemplation, who set him at liberty, and advise him to go in search of the delinquents. As soon as he is gone, Frewyll appears again; and after relating in a very comick manner some of his rogueries and escapes from justice, is rebuked by the two holy men, who, after a long altercation, at length convert him and his libertine companion Imagination from their vicious course of life: and then the play ends with a few verses from Perseverance by way of epilogue.

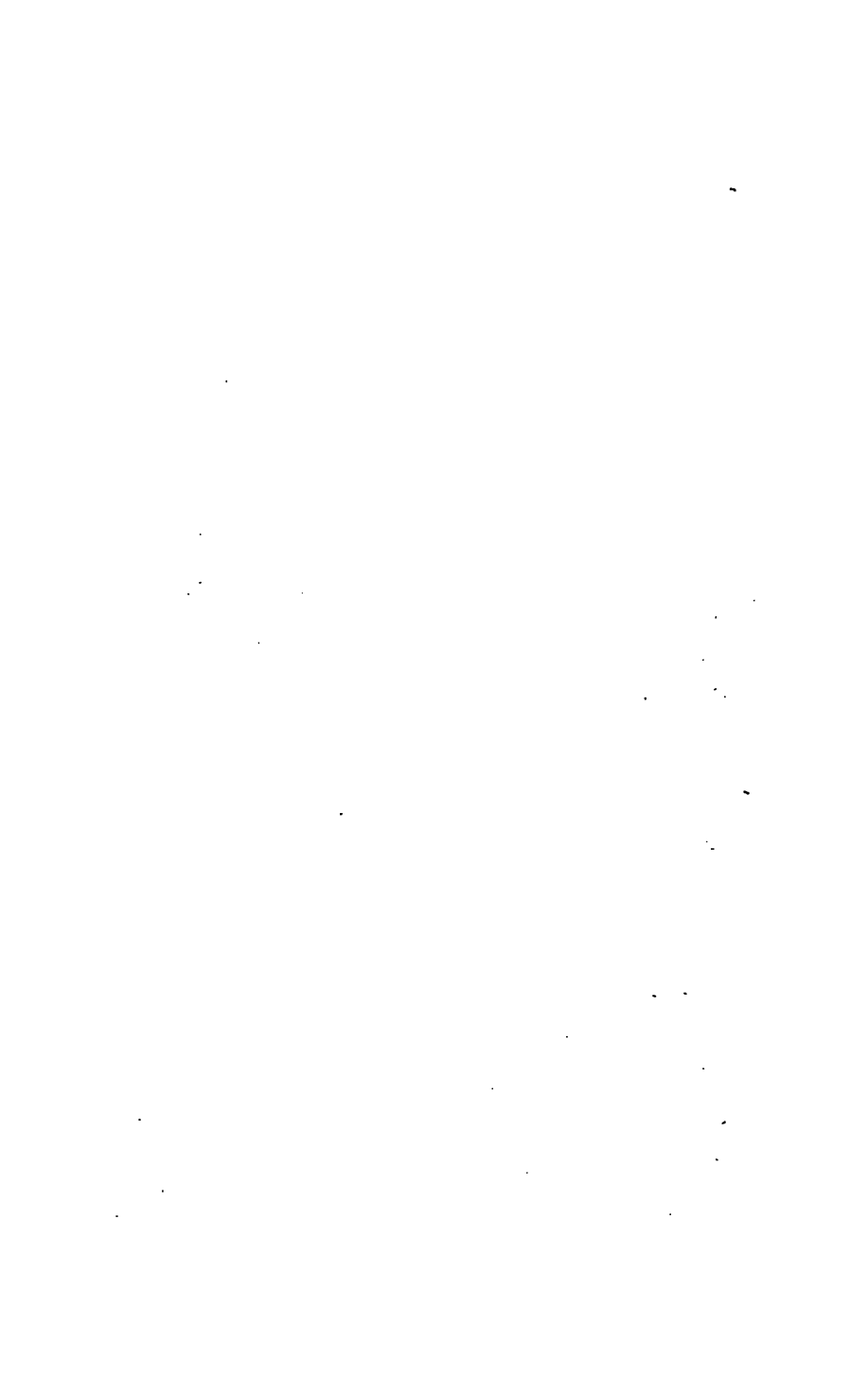
“It

*"It would be needless to point out the absurdities in the
"plan and conduct of the foregoing play: They are evidently
"great. It is sufficient to observe, that, bating the moral and
"religious reflections of Pity &c. the piece is of a comick cast,
"and contains a humorous display of some of the vices of the
"age. Indeed the author has generally been so little attentive
"to the allegory, that we need only substitute other names to
"his personages, and we have real characters and living
"manners."*

*The wood-cuts, prefixed to this and the foregoing play, were
very minutely traced and executed by a masterly hand: and,
there being something singular in giving the portraits of the
Dramatis Personæ, it is presumed, the following will be
particularly pleasing to the reader.*

Hyckescorner!









HYCKE-SCORNER, &c.

Pyte.

NOW *Ibū* the gentyll that brought *Adam* fro hell
Save you all, foveraynes, and solas you fende;
And, or this mater that I begynne to tell,
I praye you of audyence, tyll I have made an ende;
For I saye to you, my name is *Pyte*,
That ever yet hath ben mannes frende.
In the bosome of the seconde persone in trynyte
I sprange as a plante, mannes myffe to amende;
You for to helpe I put to my honde:
Recorde I take of *Mary* that wepte teres of blode;
I *Pyte* within her herte dyde stonde;
Whan she sawe her sone on the rode,
The swerde of sorowe gave that lady wounde;
Whan a spere clave her sones herte a sondre,
She cryed out, and fell to the grounde;
Though she was woo, hyt was lytell wonder.
Thys delycate colour that goodly lady,
Full pale and wanne, she sawe her sone all deed,
Splayed on a crosse with the fyve welles of pyte,
Of purple velvet poudred with roses reed.
Lo, I *Pyte* thus made your erande to be sped;
Or elles man for ever sholde have ben forlorne.
A mayden so layde hys life to wedde

Crowned

Crowned as a kynge the thornes prycked hym fore;
Charjye and I of true love ledes the double rayne;
 Whoso me loveth dampned never shall be.
 Of some vertuous company I wolde be fayne;
 For all that wyll to heven nedes must come by me;
 Chefe porter I am in that heavenly cyte.
 And now here wyll I rest me a lytell space,
 Tyll hyt please *Ihesu* of his grace
 Some vertuous felyshyp for to sende.

Contemplacyon.

Chryste that was crystened, crucyfied, and crowned;
 In his bosum true love was gaged with a spere,
 His vaynes braste and brosed, and to a pyller bounde,
 With scourges he was lashed, the knottes the skyn tare,
 On his necke to *Calvary* the grete crosse he bare,
 His blode ran to the grounde as scripiture doth tell,
 His burden was so hevy that downe under it he fell,
 Lo, I am kynne to the Lorde which is Goddes sone;
 My name is written formest in the boke of lyfe,
 For I am perfyte *Contemplacyon*,
 And brother to holy chyrche that is our Lordes wyfe.
Johan Baptyst, *Anthony*, and *Jherome*, with many mo,
 Folowed me here in holte,* hethe, and in wyldernes;
 I ever with them went where they dyde go,
 Nyght and daye towarde the waye of ryghtwysenes;
 I am the chefe lanterne of all holynes,
 Of prelates and preestes I am theyr patron;
 No armure so stronge ia no dystresse,
 Habergyon, helme, ne yet no *Feltron*,

* holte sometimes a wood, grove, or forest: so Chaucer

When Zephyrus eke, with his swete breath.

Inspirid haib, in every holt and bath

The tender croppis; ———

Sometimes in signifies a hill: so in the old Scotch song of Robin and Makyn;

Makyn went homeward blyth enough,

Outowre the holtis hair; i. e. bear bills.

See Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, Vol. 2: 77.

To fyght with *Sathan* am I the champyon,
 That dare abyde, and manfully stonde :
 Fendes fle away where they se me come ;
 But I wyll shewe you why I came to this londe
 For to preche and teche of Goddes soth sawes,
 Ayenst vyce that dothe rebell ayenst hym and hys lawes.

Pyte.

God spede, good broder; fro whens came you now?

Contemplacyon.

Syr, I came frome *Perseveraunce* to seke you.

Pyte.

Why, syr, knowe you me?

Contemplacyon.

Ye, syr, and have done longe; your name is *Pyte*.

Pyte.

Your name fayne wolde I knowe.

Contemplacyon.

In dede I am called *Contemplacyon*,
 That useth to lyve solytaryly;
 In wodes and in wyldenesse I walke alone,
 Bycause I wolde saye my prayers devoutly;
 I love not with me to have moche company :
 But *Perseveraunce* ofte with me doth mete,
 Whan I thynke on thoughtes that is full hevenly;
 Thus he and I togyder full swetely doth slepe.

Pyte.

I thanke God, that we be mette togyder.

Contemplacyon.

Syr, I trust, that *Perseveraunce* shortly wyll come hyder.

Pyte.

Than I thynke to here some good tydynge.

Contemplacyon.

I warrant you, brother, that he is comynge.

Perseveraunce.

The eternal God, that named was *Messyas*,
 He gyve you grace to come to his glorye,
 Wher ever is joye in the celestyall place,

Whan

Whan you of *Sathan* wynneth the vyctorye,
 Every man ought to be gladde to have in company,
 For I am named good *Perseverance*,
 That ever is guyded by vertuous governaunce;
 I am never varyable, but doth continue,
 Styll goynge upwarde the ladder of grace,
 And lode in me planted is so true,
 And fro the poore man I wyll never tourne my face:
 Whan I go by my selfe ofte I do remembre
 The grete kyndnes that God shewed unto man,
 For to be borne in the moneth of decembre,
 Whan the daye waxeth shorte, and the nyght lenge,
 Of his goodnesse that champion stronge
 Descended downe fro the fader of ryghtwysnes,
 And rested in *Mary* the floure of mekenes.
 Now to this place hyder come I am
 To seke *Contemplacyon* my kynnesman.

Contemplacyon.

What, brother *Perseverance*? ye be welcome.

Perseverance.

And so be you also *Contemplacyon*.

Contemplacyon.

Loo, here is our mayster *Pyte*.

Perseverance.

Now truly, ye be welcome in to this cowntre.

Pyte.

I thanke you hertely, syr *Perseverance*.

Perseverance.

Mayster *Pyte*, one thyng is com to my remembraunce;
 What thythynges here you now?

Pyte.

Syr, suche as I can I shall shewe you:
 I have herde many men complayne pyteously;
 They saye they be smyten with the swerde of poverty,
 In every place where I do go:
 Fewe frendes povertie dooth fynde,
 And these ryche men ben unkynde;

For theyr neyghbours they wyll nought do,
 Wydowes dooth curfe lordes and gentyll men,
 For they contrayne them to mary with theyr men,
 Ye, wheder they wyll or no:
 Men mary for good, and that is dampnable,
 Ye, with olde women that is fyfty and beyonde:
 The peryll now no man drede wyll;
 All is not Goddes lawe that is used in londe;
 Beware wyll they not tyll deth in his honde
 Taketh his fwerde, and fmyteth afonder the lyfe vayne,
 And with his mortall froke cleveeth the herte atwayne:
 They trust so in mercy, the lanterne of bryghtnesse,
 That no thyng do they drede Goddes ryghtwynes.

Perseveraunce.

O, *Ihesu*, syr, here is a hevy tydyng.

Pyte.

Syr, this is trewe, that I do brynge.

Contemplacyon.

How am I beloved, mayster *Pyte*, where ye come!

Pyte.

In good saythe, people have now small devocyon;
 And as for with you, brother *Contemplacyon*,
 There medleth fewe or none.

Contemplacyon.

Yes, I trust, that prestes love me wele.

Pyte.

But a fewe, I wys, and some never a dele.

Contemplacyon.

Why, syr, without me they maye not lyve clene.

Pyte.

Nay, that is the leyst thought that they have of fyftene;
 And that maketh me full hevy.

Contemplacyon.

How, trowe you that there be no remedy?

Pyte.

Full harde, for synne is now so grevous and yll,
 That I thynke, that it be growen to an impossyble.

And yet one thyng maketh me ever mournynge,
That prestes lack utterance to shoue theyr cunnyng;
And al the whyle that clerkes do use so grete synne,
Amonge the lay people loke never for no mendynge.

Perseverance.

Alas, that is a hevy case,
That so grete synne is used in every place;
I praye God it amende.

Contemplacyon.

Now God, that ever hath ben mannes frende,
Some better tydynge soone us sende;
For now I must be gone.
Fare well, good brethrene here;
A grete crande I have elles where,
That must nedes be done:
I trust, I wyll not long tary;
Theder wyll I hye me shortely,
And come agayne whan I have done.

Perseverance.

Hyder agayne, I trust, you wyll come;
Therefore God be with you.

Contemplacyon.

Syr, nedes I must departe now;
I besu me spede this daye.

Perseverance.

Now, brother *Contemplacyon*, let us go our waye.

Frewyll.

Aware, felowes, and stande a rounge:
How saye you? am not I a goodly persoun?
I trowe, you knowe not suche a geste:
What, syrres, I tell you, my name is *Frewyll*,
I may chose, wheder I do good or yll;
But for all that I wyll do as me lyst:
My condycyons ye knowe not perde,
I can fyght, chyde, and be mery;
Full soone of my company ye wolde be wery,
And ye knewe all.

What,

What, fyll the cup, and make good chere;
 I trowe, I have a noble here:
 Who lente hyt me? By *Cryste*, a frere,
 And I gave hym a fall.
 Where be ye, syr? be ye at home?
 Kockes passion, my noble is tourned to a stone.
 Where laye I last? Beshrewe your herte, *Jone*;
 Now, by these bones, she hath begyled me:
 Let se; a peny my souper, a pece of fleshe x pence;
 My bedde ryght nought: let all this expence —
 Now, by these bones, I have lost an halfpeny.
 Who laye there? my felowe *Imagynacyon*;
 He and I had good communycacyon
 Of syr *Jehan* and *Sybbell*,
 How they were spyed in bedde togyder;
 And he prayed her ofte to come thyder,
 For to synge, — *Lo, le, lo, lowe*.
 They twayne togyder had good sporte;
 But at the stewes fyde I lost a grote:
 I trowe I shall never ythe.*
 My felowe promysed me here to mete;
 But, I trowe, the horesone be a slepe,
 With a wenche some where.
 How, *Imagynacyon*, come hyder,
 And you thryve I lose a feder;
 Beshrowe your herte, appere.

Imagynacyon.

What, how, how, who called after me?

Frewyll.

Come nere, ye shall never ithe,
 Where have ye be so longe?

Imagynacyon.

By God, with me hyt it all wronge,
 I have a payre of fore buttockes,

* ythe, thrive. The to thrive. Again below, ythe. So Chaucer, and Spenser, passion.

All in irons was my songe,
Even now I satte gyved in a payre of stockes.

Frewyll.

Cockes passyon, and how so?

Imagynacyon.

Syr; I wyll tell you what I have do:
I mette with a wenche, and she was fayre,
And of love hertely I dyde praye her,
And so promysed her monaye:
Syr, she wynked on me, and sayd nought,
But by her loke I knewe her thought;
Than in to loves daunce we were brought,
That we played the pyrdewy:
I wote not what we dyde togyder,
But a knave catchpoll nyghed us nere,
And so dyde us aspye;
A strype he gave me, I fledde my touche,
And frome my gyrdle he plucked my pouche:
By your leve, he leste me never a peny:
Loo, nought have I but a bukyll,
Ane yet I can imagen thynges sotyll,
For to get monaye plenty;
In *Westmyster* hall every terme I am,
To me is kynne many a grete gentyll man,
I am knowen in every countre;
And I were deed, the lawyers thryfte were lost:
For this wyll I do yf men wolde do cost,
Prove ryght wronge, and all by reason,
And make men lese bothe hous and londe,
For all that they can do in a lytell season,
Pechen men of treason prevyly I can,
And whan me lyst to hange a trowe man,
If they wyll me monaye tell,
Theves I can helpe out of pryson,
And into lordes favours I can get me soone,
And be of theyr prevy counseyll.

But,

But, *Frewyll*, my dere broder,
Sawe you not of *Hycke-scorner*?
He promysed me to come hyder.

Frewyll.

Why, syr, knowest thou hym?

Imagynacyon.

Ye, ye, man; he is full nye of my kynne,
And in *Newgate* we dwelled togyder;
For he and I were bothe shakeled in a fetter.

Frewyll.

Syr, laye you beneth or on hye on the seller?

Imagynacyon.

Nay, ywys, amonge the thickest of yemen of the coller.

Frewyll.

By God, than ye were in grete fere.

Imagynacyon.

Syr, had I not be, cc. had be thraist in an halter.

Frewyll.

And what lyfe have they there al that grete sorte?

Imagynacyon.

By God, syr, ones a yere som *taw balis of Burports*:
Ye at tybarne there stondeth the grete frame,
And some take a fall that maketh theyr neck lame.

Frewyll.

Ye, but can they than go no more?

Imagynacyon.

O, no, man; the wrest is twyste so fore,
For as soone as they have sayd, *In manus tuas*, ones,
By God, theyr brethe is stopped at ones.

Frewyll.

Why, do they praye in that place there?

Imagynacyon.

Ye, syr, they stonde in grete fere,
And so fast tangled in that snare,
Hyt falleth to theyr lotte to have the same share.

Frewyll.

That is a knavishe fyght to se them totter on a beme.

Imagynacyon.

Syr, the horefones coude not conuaye † clene;
 For and they coude have caryed by crafte as I can,
 In proceffe of yeres eche of them sholde be a gentyll man.
 Yet as for me I was never thefe,
 If my handes were smyten of I can stele with my tethe;
 For ye knowe well, there is crafte in daubynge:
 I can loke in a mannes face, and pycke his purse,
 And tell new tydynges that was never trewe ywis,
 For my hood is all lyned with lesynge.

Frewyll.

Ye, but wente ye never to tyburne a pylgrymage?

Imagynacyon.

No, ywys; nor none of my lynages:
 For we be clerkes all, and can our necke verse,
 And with an oyntment the judges hand I can grece,
 That wyll hele fores that be incurable.

Frewyll.

Why, were ye never founde reprobable?

Imagynacyon.

Yes, ones I stall a hors in the felde,
 And lepte on hym for to have ryden my waye:
 At the last a bayly me mette and behelde,
 And badde me stonde; than was I in a fray:
 He asked, wheder with that horse I wolde gon;
 And than I tolde hym, hyt was myne owne:
 He sayd, I hadde stollen hym; and I sayde, naye;
 This is, sayd he, my brothers hacknaye.
 For and I had not scused me without fayle,
 By our lady, he wolde have lad me straye to jayle;
 And than I tolde hym, the hors was lyke myne,
 A browne bay, a longe mane, and dyde halte behyne,

† conuaye, steal. So Shakespeare.

Nym. The good humour is to steal at a minute's rest.

Pist. Convey, the wise it call: steal? sob; a fico for the phrase,

Mer. Wives of Windsor.

Thus

Thus I tolde hym, that such an other hors I dyde lack;
 And yet I never sawe hym, nor came on hys backe:
 So I delyvered hym the hors agayne.
 And whan he was gone, than was I fayne:
 For and I had not scused me the better,
 I knowe well, I sholde have daunsed in a fetter.

Frewyll.

And sayd he no more to the but so?

Imagynacyon.

Yes, he pretended me moche harme to do;
 But I tolde hym, that mornynge was a grete myste,
 That what horse hyt was I ne wyfte:
 Also I sayd, that in my heed I had the megryne,
 That made me dafell so in myne eyen,
 That I myght not well se.
 And thus he departed shortely frome me.

Frewyll.

Ye, but where is *Hycke-scorner* now?

Imagynacyon.

Some of these yonge men hathe hydde hym in
 Theyr bosomes, I warrant ye:
 Let us make a crye, that he may us here.

Frewyll.

How now, *Hycke-scorner*, appere;
 I trowe, thou be hyde in some cornere.

Hycke-scorner.

Ale the helme ale ver shot of vere sayle vera.

Frewyll.

Cockes body, herke, he is a shyppe on the see.

Hycke-scorner.

God spede, God spede; who called after me?

Imagynacyon.

What, brother, welcome by this precyous body;
 I am gladde that I you se,
 Hyt was tolde me, that ye were hanged;
 Bat out of what countre come ye?

Hycke-scorner.

Hycke-scorner.

Syrs, I have ben in many a countre;
As in *Fraunce*, *Irlande*, and in *Spayne*,
Portyngale, *Sevyll*, also in *Almayne*;
Freslonde, *Flaunders*, and in *Burgoyne*,
Calabre, *Poyse*, and *Erragoyne*,
Brytayne, *Byske*, and also in *Gascoyne*,
Naples, *Grece*, and in myddes of *Scotlonde*,
At *Cape*, saynt *Vycent*, and in the *Newe founde Ilonde*,
I have ben in *Gene* and in *Cowe*,
Also in the londe of *Rumbelowe*,
Thre myl out of hell,
At *Rhodes*, *Constantyne*, and in *Babylonde*,
In *Cornewale*, and in *Northumberlande*,
Where men sethe rushes in gruell,
Ye, fyr, in *Caldey*, *Tartare*, and *Inde*,
And in the londe of women that fewe men dothe fynde,
In all these countres have I be.

Frewyll.

Syr, what tydynges here ye now on the set?

Hycke-scorner.

We mette of shyppes a grete nave,
Full of people that wolde in to *Irlande*;
And they came out of this countre:
They wyll never more come to *Englonde*.

Imagynacyon.

Whens were the shyppes of them? knowest thou none?

Hycke-scorner.

Herken, and I wyll shewe you theyr names eche one:
Fyrst was the *Regent*, with the *Mygbell* of *Brykylse*,
The *George*, with the *Grabryell*, and the *Anne* of *Foyse*,
The starre of *Salte-Ashe* with the *Ihesus* of *Plumoth*,
Also the *Hermytage*, with the *Barbara* of *Darmonth*,
The *Nycolas*, and the *Mary Bellouse* of *Bryssowe*,
With the *Elyn* of *London* and *James* also:
Grete was the people that was in them,
All true relygyous and holy women:
There was trouthe and his kynnesman,

With

With pacyence, mekenes, and humylyte,
 And all true maydens wyth theyr vyrgynyte,
 Ryall prechers, fadnes and charyte,
 Ryght conscyence, and fayth, with devocyon,
 And all true monkes that kepe theyr relyon,
 True buyers and sellers, and almes dedes doers,
 Pyteous people, that be of synne destroyers,
 With iust abstyence and good counseillers,
 Mourners for synne, with lamentacyon,
 And good ryche men that helpeth folke out of pryson;
 True wedlocke was there also,
 With yonge men that ever in prayer dyde go,
 The shyppes were laden with such unhappy company.
 But at the laste God shope a remedy,
 For they all in the see were drounde;
 And on a quicke sonde they streke to grounde;
 The see swalowed them everychone,
 I wote well, alyve, there scaped none.

Imagynacyon.

Lo, now my herte is gladde and mery;
 For joye now let us synge *dery dery*.

Hycke-scorner.

Felowes, they shall never more us withstonde;
 For I se them all drowned in the rase of *Irlande*.

Frewyll.

Ye, but yet herke, *Hycke-scorner*,
 What company was in your shyppe that came over?

Hycke-scorner.

Syr, I wyll fayd you to understande,
 There were good felawes above fyve thousande,
 And all they ben kynne to us thre:
 There was falshode, favell, and jolyte,
 Ye, theves, and hores, with other good company,
 Lyers, backbyters, and flaterers the whyle,
 Braulers, lyers, getters, and chyders,
 Walkers by nyght, with grete murderers,
 Overthwarte gyle, and joly carders,
 Oppressers of people, with many swerers,

There.

There was false lawe with oryble vengeance,
 Frowarde obstynacyon with myschevous governaunce,
 Wanton wenches, and also mychers,
 With many other of the devylles offycers;
 And haterede, that is so myghty and stronge,
 Hath made a'vowe for ever to dwell in *Englond*.

Imagynacyon.

But is that true, that thou doste shewe now?

Hycke-scorner.

Syr, every worde as I do tell you.

Frewyll.

Of whens is your shyppe? of *London*?

Hycke-scorner.

Ye, ywis frome thens dyde she come;

And she is named *The Envy*,

I tell you a grete vessell and a myghty:

The owner of her is called *Yll Wyll*,

Brother to *Jacke Poller* of *Sboters byll*.

Imagynacyon.

Syr, what offyce in the shyppe bare ye?

Hycke-scorner.

Mary, I kepte a fayre shoppe of baudrye,

I had three wenches that were full praty,

Jane true and thryftles, and wanton *Sybbell*,

If ye ryde her a journey she wyll make you wery,

For she is trusty at nede:

If ye wyll hyre her for your pleasure,

I warraunt, tere her shall ye never,

She is so sure in dede;

Ryde and you wyll ten tymes adaye,

I warraunt you, she wyll never saye naye,

My lyfe I dare lay to wedde.

Imagynacyon.

Now plucke up your hertes, and make good chere;

These tydynges lyketh me wonder wele,

Now vertu shall drawe arere arere:

Herke, felous, a good spote I can you tell,

At the stues we wyll lye to nyght,

And by my trowth, yf all go aryght,

I wyll

I wyll begyle some praty wenche,
 To gette me monaye at a pynche.
 How faye you? shall we go thyder?
 Let us kepe company all togyder,
 And I wolde that we had Goddes curse,
 If we some where do not get a purse;
 Every man bere his dagger naked in his honde,
 And if we mete a true man make hym stonde,
 Or elles that he bere a strype;
 If that he strugge ond make ony werke,
 Lightly stryke hym to the herte,
 And throwe hym into temmes quyte.

Frewyll.

Naye, thre knaves in a lease is good at nale: •
 But, thou lubber, *Imagynacyon*,
 That cuckolde thy fader where is he become?
 At *Newgate* dothe he ly styll at gayle?

Imagynacyon.

Avaunt, horsfone, thou shalte bere me a strype;
 Sayst thou, that my moder was a hore?

Frewyll.

Naye, syr, but the last nyght
 I sawe syr *Jobne* and she tombled on the flore.

Imagynacyon.

Now by kokkes herte, thou shalte lose an arme.

Hycke-scorner.

Naye, syr, I charge you do hym no harme.

Imagynacyon.

And thou make to moche I wyll breke thy heed to.

Hycke-scorner.

By saynt *Mary*, and I wyft that I wolde be ago.

Imagynacyon.

Aware, aware; the horesone shall aby,
 His preest wyll I be by cockes body.

• at nale, at the alehouse. So Chaucer in the *Frere's Tale*:

*And they were inly glad to fill his purse,
 And maden him grete festis at the Nale.*

Hycke-scorner.

Kepe pease, lest knaves blode be shedde.

Frewyll.

By God, if his was nought myn was as badde.

Imagynacyon.

By kockes herte he shall dye on this dager.

Hycke-scorner.

By our Lady, than wyll ye be straungled in a halter:

Imagynacyon.

The horesone shall ete hym as fer as he shall wade.

Hycke-scorner.

Beshrewe your herte, and put up your blade,
 Shethe your whytell, or by hyz that was never borne,
 I wyll rappe you on the costarde with my horne;
 What, wyll ye playe all the knave?

Imagynacyon.

By kockes herte, and thou a buffet shalte have.

Frewyll.

Lo, fyrres, here is a fayre company, God us save;
 For yf ony of us thre be mayre of *London*,
 I wys, ywis, I wyll ryde to *Rome* on my thom:
 Alas! a, se; is not this a grete feres?
 I wolde they were in a myll pole above the eres;
 And than I durst warraunt, they wolde departe anone.

Hycke-scorner.

Helpe, helpe, for the passyon of my foule;
 He hath made a grete hole in my poule,
 That all my wytte is set to the grounde:
 Alas! a leche for to helpe my wounde.

Imagynacyon.

Naye, ywis, horesone, I wyll bete the or I go.

Frewyll.

Alas! good fyr, what have I do?

Imagynacyon.

Ware, make rome, he shall have a strype I trowe;

Pyte.

Peas, peas, fyrres, I commaunde you.

Imagynacyon.

Imagynacyon.

Avaunt, old churle; whens comest thou?
 And thou make to moche, I shall breke thy browe,
 And sende the home agayne.

Pyte.

A, good fyr, the peas I wolde have kepte fayne;
 Myne offyce is to se no man slayne;
 And, where they do amyfe, to gyve them good counfeyl,
 Synne to forsake, and Goddes lawe them tell.

Imagynacyon.

A, fyr, I wende thou haddest ben drowned and gone;
 But I have spyed, that there scaped one.

Hycke-scorner.

Imagynacyon, do by the counfeyll of me,
 Be a greed with *Frewyll*, and lette us good felowes be;
 And than, as for this chorle *Pyte*,
 Shall curse the tyme that ever he came to londe.

Imagynacyon.

Brother *Frewyll*, give me your honde,
 And all myne yll wyll I forgyve the.

Frewyll.

Syr, I thanke you hertely;
 But what shall we do with this chorle *Pyte*?

Imagynacyon.

I wyll go to hym, and pyke a quarrell,
 And make hym a thefe, and saye he dyde stele
 Of myne forty ponde in a bagge.

Frewyll.

By God, that tydynges wyll make hym sadde;
 And I wyll go fetch a payre of gyves,
 For in good faythe, he shall be sette fast by the heles.

Hycke-scorner.

Have ado lyghtly, and be gone,
 And let us twayne with him alone.

Frewyll.

Now, farewell, I beshrewe you everychone.

Hycke-scorner.

Ho, ho, *Frewyll* you threwe, and no mo.

Imagynacyon.

Imagynacyon.

Thou lewde felowe, sayst thou that thy name is *Pite*?
Who sent the hyder to controull me?

Pyte.

Good fyr, hyt is my properte
For to dyspyse synfull lyvyng,
And unto vertu men to brynge,
If that they wyll do after me.

Imagynacyon.

What, fyr, art thou so pure holy?
A, se, this caytyfe wolde be prayfed I trowe;
And you thryve this yere I wyll lose a peny.
Lo, fyrres, outwarde he bereth a fayre face;
But and he mette with a wenche in a prevy place,
I trowe, he wolde shewe her but lytell grace:
By God, ye may trust me.

Hycle-scorner.

Loo, wyll ye not se this caytyves meanyng?
He wolde destroye us all, and all our kynne,
Yet had I lever se hym hanged by the chynne,
Rather than that sholde be broughte aboute;
And with this dager thou shalte have a cloute,
Withoute thou wylte be lyghtly be gone.

Imagynacyon.

Naye, brother, laye honde on hym soone;
For he japed my wyfe, and made me cukolde,
And yet the traytove was so bolde,
That he stole forty pounde of myne in monaye.

Hycle-scorner.

By faynt *Mary*, than he shall not scape;
We wyll lede hym strayght to *Newgate*,
For ever there shall he lye.

Frewyll.

A, se, a, se, fyrres, what I have brought,
A medycyne for a pare of sore shynnes;
At the kynges benche, fyrres, I have you sought,
But I praye you, who shall were these?

Hycle-scorner.

Hycke-scorner.

By God, this felowe that maye not go hence,
 I wyll go gyve hym theſe hofe rynges;
 Now yſaythe, they be worth forty pence,
 But to his hondes I lacke two bondes.

Imagynacyon.

Holde, horeſone, here is an halter;
 Bynde hym faſt, and make hym ſure.

Pyte.

O men, let trouth that is the trewe man
 Be your guyder, or elles ye be forlorne;
 Laye no falſ wytneſ, as nye as ye can,
 On none; for afterwarde ye wyll repent hyt full fore.

Frewyll.

Naye, naye; I care not therfore.

Hycke-scorner.

Ye, whan my ſoule hangeth on the hedge caſt ſtones,
 For I tell thee playnly by kockes bones,
 Thou ſhalte be guyded, and layd in irons,
 They fared even ſo.

Pyte.

Awaye, ſyr, what have I do?

Imagynacyon.

Well, well, that thou ſhalte knowe, or thou go.

Pyte.

O ſyrres, I ſe hyt can not be amended,
 You do me wrong, for I have not offended:
 Remembre God that is our heven kyng,
 For he wyll rewarde you after your deſervyng;
 Whan deth with his mace dooth you areeſt,
 We all to hym owe fewte and ſervyce,
 Fro the ladder of lyfe downe he wyll the threſte,
 Than maſterſhypp may not helpe nor grete offyce.

Frewyll.

What, deth and he were here, he ſholde ſyt by the;
 Troweſt thou, that he be able to ſtryve with us thre?
 Nay, nay, nay.

Imagynacyon.

Imagynacyon.

Well, felawes, now let us go our waye;
For a *Sboters byll* we have a game to playe.

Hycke-scorner.

In good fayth, I wyll tary no lenger space.

Frewyll.

Beshrewe hym for me that is last out of this place.

Pys.

Lo, Lordes, they may curs the tyme they were borne;

For the wedes that over groweth the corne,

They troubled me gyltelefs, and wote not why,

For Goddes love yet wyll I suffre pacyently:

We all may say, weleaway for synne that is now adaye.

Loo, vertue is vanyshed for ever daye,

Worse was hyt never.

We have plente of grete othes,

And clothe ynoughe in our clothes,

But charyte many men lothes,

Worse was hyt never.

Alas, now is lechery called love indede,

And murder named manhode in every nede,

Extorsyon is called lawe, so God we spede;

Worse was hyt never.

Youth walketh by nyght with swerdes and knyves,

And ever amonge true men leseth theyr lyves,

Lyke heretykes we occupy other mennes wyves,

Now a dayes in *Englonde*:

Baudes be the dystryers of many yonge women,

And full lewde counseyll they gyve unto them;

How you do mary beware, you yonge men,

The wyfe never taryeth to longe;

There be many grete scorners,

But for synne there be fewe mourners;

We have but fewe true lovers

In no place now a dayes;

There be many goodly gylte knaves,

And I knowe, as many apparaylled wyves,

Yet many of them be unthryfty of theyr lyves,

And

And all set in pryde to go gaye.
 Mayers on synne dooth no correccyon,
 With gentyll men bereth trouthe adowne;
 Avoutry is suffred in every towne,
 Amendymment is there none,
 And Goddes commaundementes we breke them all x.
 Devocyon is gone many dayes syn.
 Let us amende us we trewe crysten men,
 Or deth make you grone.
 Courtyers go gaye, and take lytell wages,
 And many with harlottes at the tavernne hauntes,
 They be yemen of the wrethe that be shakled in gyves;
 On themselfe they have no pyte:
 God punysheth full fore with grete sekeneffe,
 As pockes, pestylence, purple, and axes,
 Some dyeth sodeynly that deth full peryllous,
 Yet was there never so grete poverté.
 There be some sermones made by noble doctoures;
 But truly the fende dothe stoppe mennes eres,
 For God nor good man some people not feres;
 Worse was hyt never.
 All trouth is not best sayd,
 And our prechers now adayes be halfe afrayde:
 Whan we do amende God wolde be well apayde;
 Worse was hyt never.

Contemplacyon.

What, mayster *Pyte*, how is hyt with you?

Perseveraunce.

Syr, we be fory to se you in this case now.

Pyte.

Brethrene, here were thre peryllous men,
Frewyll, *Hycke-scorner*, and *Imagynacyon*;
 They sayd, I was a thefe, and layd felony upon me,
 And bounde me in irons as ye may se.

Contemplacyon.

Where be the traytours become nowe?

Pyte.

In goode faythe, I can not shewe you.

Perseverance.

Brother, let us unbynde hym of his bondes.

Contemplacyon.

Unlose the fete and the hondes.

Pyte.

I thanke you for your grete kyndnes,
That you two shewe in this dystresse;
For they were men without ony mercy,
That delyteth all in myschefe and tyranny.

Perseverance.

I thynke, they wyll come hyder agayne,
Frewyll and *Imagynacyon*, bothe twayne:
Them wyll I exhorte to vertuous lyvyng,
And unto vertu them to brynge,
By the helpe of you, *Contemplacyon*.

Contemplacyon.

Do my counseyll, brother *Pyte*;
Go you, and seke them throughe the countre,
In vyllage, towne, bourghe, and cyte,
Throughe out all the realme of *Englende*:
Whan you them mete, lyghtly them areft,
And in pryson put them faste,
Bynde them sure in irons stronge;
For they be so faste and sotyle,
That they wyll you begyle,
And do true men wronge.

Perseverance.

Brother *Pyte*, do as he hath sayd,
In every quarter loke you aspye,
And let good watche for them be layde,
In all the haast that thou can, and that pryvely;
For and they come hyder, they shall not scape,
For all the craste that they can make.

Pyte.

Well, than wyll I hye me as fast as I maye,
And travayle throughe every countre;

Good

Good watche shall be layde in every waye,
That they stele not into sentwary.
Now fare wele, bretherne, and praye for me;
For I must go hens in dede.

Perseveraunce.

Now God be your good spede.

Contemplacyon.

And ever you defende, whan you have nede.

Pyte.

Now, brethrene bothe, I thanke you.

Frewyll.

Make you rome for a gentylman, fyrs, and pease;
Duegarde, feynours, tout le preasse,
And of your jangelynge yf ye wyll sease,
I wyll tell you where I have bene:
Syrres, I was at the taverne, and dronke wyne,
Methought, I sawe a pece that was lyke myne,
And, syr, all my fyngers were arayed with lyme,
So I conveyed a cuppe manerly:
And yet ywys, I played all the sole,
For there was a scoler of myne owne scole;
And, syr, the horesone aspyed me.
Than was I rested, and brought in pryson;
For woot than I wyfte not what to have done,
And all bycause I lacked monaye,
But a frende in courte is worthe a peny in purs:
For *Imagynacyon*, myne owne felowe, I wys,
He dyde helpe me out full craftely.
Syrres, he walked thrughe *Holborne*,
Thre houres after the sonne was downe,
And walked up towarde saynte *Gyles* in the felde:
He hoved styll, and there behelde,
But there he coude not spede of his praye,
And straight to *Ludgate* he toke the waye;
Ye wote well, that potycaryes walke very late,
He came to a dore, and pryvely spake

To a prentes for a peny worth of usorbyum,
 And also for a half peny worth of alom plomme;
 This good servaunte served hym shortely,
 And sayd, is there ought elles that you wolde bye?
 Than he asked for a mouthfull of quycke brymstone;*
 And downe in to the seller whan the servant was gone,
 Asyde as he kest his eye,
 A grete bagge of monaye dyde he spyde,
 Therin was an hondred pounce:
 He trussed hym to his fete, and yede his waye rounde,
 He was lodged at *Newgate* at the swanne,
 And every man toke hym for a gentyll man;
 So on the morowe he delyvered me
 Out of *Newgate* by this polyce:
 And now wyll I daunce an make ryall chere.
 But I wolde, *Imagynacyon* were here,
 For he is pereles at nede;
 Labour to hym, fyrres, yf ye wyl your maters spede.
 Now wyll I synge, and lustely sprynge;
 But whan my fetters on my leges dyde rynge,
 I was not gladde perde; but now — *Hey, trolly, lolly*.
 Let us se who can descaunt on this same;
 To laughe, and get manaye, hyt were a good game.
 What, whome have we here?
 A preeft, a douctoure, or else a frere.
 What, mayster doctour *Dotypoll*?
 Can not you preche well in a blacke boll?
 Or dyspute ony dyvynyte?
 If ye be cunnyng, I wyll put hyt in a prefe:
 Good syr, why do men ete mustarde with bese?
 By question can you assoyle me?

Perseveraunce.

Peas, man, thou talkest lewdly,
 And of thy lyvyng, I reed, amende the.

* quick brymstone, gunpowder.

Frewyll.

Avaunt, catyfe, dooft thou thou me!
I am come of good kynne, I tell the:
My moder was a lady of the stewes blode borne,
And knyght of the halte: my fader ware an horne;
Therefore I take hyt in full grete scorne,
That thou sholdest thus cheke me.

Contemplacyon.

Abyde, felowe, thou cast lytell curtesye,
Thou shalte be charmed or thou hens pafe,
For thou troubled *Pyte*, and layd on hym felony:
Where is *Imagynacyon*, thy felawe that was?

Frewyll.

I defy you bothe; wyll you arest me?

Perseverance.

Naye, naye; thy grete wordes maye not helpe the,
Fro us thou shalte not escape.

Frewyll.

Make rome, fyrres, that I maye breke his pate;
I wyll not be taken for them bothe.

Contemplacyon.

Thou shalt abyde, whether thou be leve or lothe;
Therefore, good sone, lyften unto me,
And marke these wordes that I do tell thee:
Thou hast folowed thyne one wyll many a daye,
And lyved in synne without amendement;
Therefore in thy conceyte assaye
To axe God mercy, and kepe his commaundement,
Than on the he wyll have pyte,
And brynge the to heven that joyful cyte.

Frewyll.

What, horesone? Wyll ye have me now a sole?
Naye, yet had I lever be capayne of *Calays*;
For and I sholde do after your scole
To learne to pater to make me pevyffe;
Yet had I lever loke with a face full thevyshe:
And therefore, prate no lenger here,
Leeft my knaves fyfte hytte you under the yere.

What, ye dawes, wolde ye reed me,
 For to lese my pleasure in youth and jolyte,
 To baffe and kyffe my swete trully mully,
As Jane, Cate, Bessie, and Sybble?
 I wolde that hell were full of suche prymmes,
 Than wolde I renne thyder on my pynnes
 As fast as I myght go.

Perseveraunce.

Why, syr, whylte thou not love vertu,
 And forsake thy synne for the love of God Almighty?

Frewyll.

What God Almighty by Goddes fast at *Salisbury*,
 And I trowe Eester day fell on Whytsonday that yere,
 There were v. score save an hondred in my company,
 And at pety *Judas* we made ryall chere,
 There had we good ale of *Myghelmas* bruyng;
 There heven hye lepyng and spryngyng,
 And thus dyde I
 Lepe out of *Burdeaus* unto *Caunterbury*,
 Almost ten myle bytwene.

Contemplacyon.

Frewyll, forsake all this worlde wylfully here,
 And chaunge by tyme, thou oughtest to stonde in fere;
 For fortune wyll tourne her whele to swyfte,
 That clene fro thy welthe she wyll the lyfte.

Frewyll.

What, list me, who? and *Imagynacyon* were here now,
 I wys with his syst he wolde all to cloute you:
 Hens, horefone, tary no lenger here;
 For by saynt *Pyntell* the apostell I swere,
 That I wyll dryve you bothe home,
 And yet I was never wonte to fyght alone:
 Alas, that I had not one to bolde me,
 Than you sholde se me playe the man shamfully;
 Alas, hyt wolde do me good to fyght;
 How saye you, lordes, shall I smyte?
 Have amonge you, by this lyght:
 Hens horefones, and home at ones,

Or

Or with my wepen I shall breke your bones.
Avaunt, you knave, walke by my counfeyll.

Perseveraunce.

Sone, remembre the grete paynes of hell,
They are so horryble that no tongue can tell;
Beware, lest thou thyder do go.

Frewyll.

Naye, by saynt *Mary*, I hope not so;
I wyll not go to the devyll, whyle I have my lyberte,
He shall take the laboure to fet me, and he wyll have me;
For he that wyll go to hell by his wyll voluntarily,
The devyll and the worlewynde go wyth hym:
I wyll you never fro thens tydyngs brynge;
Go you before, and shewe me the waye,
And as to folowe you I wyll not saye naye:
For by Goddes body, and you be in ones,
By the masse, I wyll shytt the dore at ones,
And than ye be take in a pytfall.

Contemplacyon.

Now, *Ihesus*, soone defende us frome that hole,
For, *Qui est in inferno nulla est redemptio*:
Holy *Job* spake these wordes full longe ago.

Frewyll.

Nay, I have done, and you lade out *Latyn* with scope;
But therwith can you cloute me a payre of botes?
By our lady, ye sholde have some werke of me,
I wolde have them well underlayd and easely,
For I use alwaye to goe one the one syde;
And trowe ye how? by God in the stockes I sate tyd,
I trowe a thre wekes and more a lytell stounde,
And there I laboured fore daye by daye,
And so I tred my shone inwarde in gooder faye;
Lo, therefore methynke you must soule them rounde.
If you have any newe botes, a payre I wolde by,
But I thynke your pryce be to hye.
Syr, ones at *Newgate* I bought a payre of sterres,
A myghty payre and a stronge,
A hole yere I ware them so longe,

But

But they came not fully to my knee,
 And to cloute them hyt coft not me a peny :
 Even now and ye go thyder, ye shall fynde a grete hepe,
 And you speke in my name ye shall have good chepe.

Perseverance.

Syr, we came never there, ne never shall do.

Freewyll.

Mary, I was taken in a trap there, and tyde by the to,
 That I halted a grete whyle, and myght not go.
 I wolde ye bothe sate as fast there;
 Than sholde ye daunce as a bere,
 And all by gangelynge of your chaynes.

Contemplacyon.

Why, syr, were ye there ?

Freewyll.

Ye, and that is sene by my braynes ;
 For, or I came there I was as wyse as a woodcock,
 And, I thanke God, as wytte as a haddocke.
 Yet I trust to recover as other dose,
 For and I had ones as moche wytte as a gose,
 I sholde be marchaunt of the banke ;
 Of golde than I sholde have many a franke,
 For yf I myght make iii good vyages to *Sboters byl*,
 And have wynde and wedder at my wyll,
 Than wolde I never travell the see more :
 But hyt is harde to kepe the shyppe fro the shore,
 And yf hyt happe to ryse a storme,
 Than throwen in a rasc, and so aboute borne
 On rockes or brachis for to ronne,
 Elles to stryke a grounde at tyborne,
 That were a myschevous case,
 For that rocke of tyborne is so peryllous a place,
 Yonge galauntes dare not venture into *Kente* ;
 But whan theyr monaye is gone and spent,
 With theyr longe botes they rowe on the baye,
 And ony man of warre lye by the waye,
 They must take a bote, and throwe the helme ale ;
 And full harde hyt is to scape that grete jeopardye,

For

For at saynt *Thomas of Watrynge* and they stryke a sayle,
 Than must they ryde in the haven of hepe without sayle;
 And were not these two jeopordous places in dede,
 Ther is many a marchaunt that thyder wolde spede:
 But yet we have a sure canell at *Westmyster*,
 A thousande shypes of theves therin may ryde sure;
 For yf they may have ankerholde, and grete spendynge,
 They may lyve as mery as ony kynge.

Perseveraunce.

Good woote, syr, there is a pyteous lyvynge,
 Than ye drede not the grete mayster above:
 Sone, forsake thy mysse for his love,
 And than mayst thou come to the blisse also.

Frewyll.

Why, what wolde you that I sholde do?

Contemplacyon.

For to go towarde heven.

Frewyll.

Mary, and you wyll me thyder brynge,
 I wolde do after you.

Perseveraunce.

I praye you, remembre my wordes now:
Frewyll, bethynke the that thou shalte dye,
 And of the houre thou are uncertayne,
 Yet by thy lyfe thou mayst fynde a remedy;
 For and thou dye in synne, all laboure is in vayne,
 Than shall thy soule be styll in payne.
 Losse and dampned for evermore;
 Helpe is past thoughe thou wolde fayne,
 Than thou wylte curse the tyme that thou were bore.

Frewyll.

Syr, yf ye wyll undertake that I saved shall be,
 I wyll do all the penaunce that you wyll sette me.

Contemplacyon.

If that thou for thy synnes be sory,
 Our lorde wyll forgyve the them.

Frewyll.

Frewyll.

Now of all my synnes I axe God mercy;
 Here I forsake synne, and trust to amende:
 I beseeche *Ihesu* that is moost myghty
 To forgyve all that I have offende.

Perseveraunce.

Our lorde now wyll shewe the his mercy,
 A newe name thou nede none have;
 For all that wyll to heven hye,
 By his owne frewyll he must forsake folye,
 Than is he sure and save.

Contemplacyon.

Holde here a newe garment,
 And here after lyve devoutly,
 And for thy synnes do ever repente,
 Sorowe for thy synnes is very remedy:
 And, *Frewyll*, ever to vertue applye,
 Also to sadnes gyve ye attendaunce,
 Let hym never out of remembraunce.

Frewyll.

I wyll never frome you, syr *Perseveraunce*;
 With you wyll I abyde bothe daye and nyght,
 Of mynde never to be varyable,
 And Goddes commaundementes to kepe them ryght,
 In deed and worde, and ever full stable.

Perseveraunce.

Than heven thou shalte have without fable,
 But loke that thou be stedfaste,
 And let thy mynde with good wyll laste.

Imagynacyon.

Huffe, huffe, huffe! who sent after me?
 I am *Imagynacyon*, full of jolyte.
 Lorde, that my herte is lyght,
 Whan shall I peryshe? I trowe never;
 By *Cryss* I recke not a feder:
 Even now I was dubbed a knyght,
 Where at tyburne of the coller,
 And of the stewes I am made controller,

Of all the houses of lechery ;
 There shall no man playe doccy there,
 At the bell, hertes horne, ne elles where,
 Without they have leve of me.
 But, syrres, wote ye why I am come hyder ?
 By our lady togyder good company togyder :
 Saue ye not of my felawe *Frewyll* ?
 I am aferde lest he be serchyng on a hyll ;
 By God, than one of us is begyled.
 What felawe is this that in this cote is fyled ?
 Kockes deth, whome have we here ?
 What, *Frewyll*, myn owne fere ?
 Arte thou out of thy mynde ?

Frewyll.

God graunte the way to heven that I maye fynde ;
 For I forsake thy company.

Imagynacyon.

Goddess armes, my company ? and why ?

Frewyll.

For thou lyvest to synfully.

Imagynacyon.

Alas, tell me how hyt is with the.

Frewyll.

Forfak thy synne for the love of me.

Imagynacyon.

Kockes herte, arte thou waxed made ?

Frewyll.

Whan I thynke on my synne, it makes me ful fade.

Imagynacyon.

Goddess woundes, who gave the that counsel ?

Frewyll.

Perseveraunce and *Contemplacyon*, I thee tell.

Imagynacyon.

A vengeance on them, I wolde they were in hell.

Frewyll.

Amende, *Imagynacyon*, and mercy crye.

Imagynacyon.

Imagynacyon.

By Goddes sydes, I had lever be hanged on hye;
 Naye, that wolde I not do, I had lever dye.
 By Goddes passyon, and I hadde a longe knyfe,
 I wolde bereve these two horesones of theyr lyfe:
 How, how? twenty pounds for a dagger.

Contemplacyon.

Peas, peas, good sone, and speke softer,
 And amende, or deth drawe his draught;
 For on the he wyll stele full softe,
 He gyveth never no man warnynge,
 And ever to the he is comynge:
 Therefore remembre the well.

Imagynacyon.

A, horesone, yf I were jayler of hell,
 I wys, some sorowe sholde thou fele;
 For to the devyll I wolde the sell,
 Than sholde ye have many a fory mele,
 I wyll never gyve you mete ne drynke,
 Ye sholde fast, horesones, tyll ye dyde stynecke,
 Even as a roten dogge; ye, by saynt tyburne of *Kent*.

Perseveraunce.

Imagynacyon, thynke what God dyd for the;
 On good fridaye he hanged on a tre,
 And spent all his precyous blode,
 A spere dyde ryve his herte a sonder,
 The gates he brake up with a clappe of thunder,
 And *Adam* and *Eve* there delyvered he.

Imagynacyon.

What, devyll, what is that to me?
 By Goddes fast, I was ten yere in *Newgate*,
 And many more felawes with me fate,
 Yet he never came there to helpe me, ne my company.

Contemplacyon.

Yes, he holpe the, or thou haddest not ben here now.

Imagynacyon.

By the masse, I can not shewe you,
 For he and I never dranke togyder,

Yet

Yet I knowe many an ale stake ; *
 Neyther at the stues, I wyfte, he never came thyder :
 Gooth he arrayed in whyte or in blacke ?
 For and he out of pryson had holpe me,
 I knowe well ones I sholde hym se :
 What gowne wereth he, I praye you ?

Perseveraunce.

Syr, he halpe you out by his myght.

Imagynacyon.

I can not tell you, by this lyght ;
 But me thought that I laye there to longe,
 And the horesone fetters were so stronge,
 That hadde almost brought my necke out of joynt.

Perseveraunce.

Amende, sone, and thou shalt know hym
 That delyverd the out of pryson ;
 And yf thou wylt forsake thy myffe,
 Surely thou shalt come to the blyffe,
 And be inheritour of heven.

Imagynacyon.

What, syr, above the mone ?
 Naye, by the masse, than sholde I fall soone ;
 Yet I kepe not to clymme so hye ;
 But to clymme for a byrdes neste,
 There is none bytwene east and weste,
 That dare therto ventre better than I :
 But to ventre to heven, what and my fete slyppe ?
 I knowe well, than I sholde breke my necke,
 And by God than hadde I the worse syde ;
 Yet had I lever be by the nose tyde,
 In a wenches ars somewhere,
 Rather than I wolde stande in that grete fere,
 For to go up to heven: naye, I praye you, lette be.

* Ale-stake, a maypole, a sign before an ale-house. Chaucer in *The*
Deffour of Physike's Tale, calls it ale-house stake:

*But first, quoth he, here at this ale-house stake,
 I wold bestee drinke, and etin of a cake.* Urry's Edit. P. 231.

Imagynacyon.



A

M O R A L I T Y.



LUSTY JUVENTUS.

The editor has been favoured with two copies of this moral Interlude; one of which is preserved in the library belonging to Lincoln cathedral, the other is in the possession of Mr. Garrick: it was written in the reign of Edward the sixth, by one R. Wever, of whom the editor can give the reader no further information. The former was printed at London by Abraham Vele; the latter is a very different copy from the other: a more obsolete spelling runs through the whole, and it contains great variations besides, which the reader will find at the bottom of each page; the conclusion being imperfect, the printer's Colophon is wanting, so that it cannot be known where this edition was printed. According to Dr. Percy's tables it was printed by Richard Pinson.

The design of this Interlude was to expose the superstitions of the Romish church, and to promote the reformation. The stage (as the learned Dr. Percy observes) in those days literally was, what wise men have always wished it, — a supplement to the pulpit: chapter and verse are as formally quoted as in a sermon. See Prologue of the Messenger, &c. From this play we learn that most of the young people were new Gospellers, or friends to the reformation; and that the old were tenacious of the doctrines imbibed in their youth: for thus the Devil is introduced lamenting the downfall of superstition,

*The olde people would beleve still in my lawes,
But the yonger sort loads them a contrary way;
They wyll not beleve, they playnly say,
In old traditions and made by men,
But they wyll lyve as the scripture teacheth them, &c.*

And in another place Hypocrity urges,

*The world was never mery,
Since children were so bolde:
Now every boy wyl be a teacher,
The father a foole, and the chyld a preacher.*

AN ENTERLUDE

CALLED

LUSTY JUVENTUS,

LYVELY DESCRIBING THE FRAILTIE OF

YOUTH: OF NATURE PRONE TO VYCE:

BY GRACE AND GOOD COUNCELL

TRAYNABLE TO VERTUE.

THE PERSONAGES THAT SPEAKE.

MESSENGER.

LUSTY JUVENTUS.

GOOD COUNCELL.

KNOWLEDGE.

SATHAN THE DEVYL.

HYPOCRISIE.

FELLOWSHYP.

ABHOMINABLE LIVING.

GODS MERCYFULL PROMYSES.

Fourē may play it easely, takyng such partes as they thinke best: so that any one, tak of those partes that be not in place at once.

The PROLOGUE of the MESSENGER.

FOR as much as man is naturally prone
To evil from hys youth, as scripture doth recite, †
It is necessary, that he be spedily withdrawen
From concupiscence of sin, hys naturall appetite:
An ¹ ordre to bringe up youth *Ecclesiasticus* doth write,—
An untamed horse wyll be harde, sayth he,
And a wanton chylde wylful wyll be.

Give him no libertie in youth, nor hys folly excuse,
Bow downe his necke, and kepe him in good awe,
Leasse he be stubburne: no laboure refuse
To trayne hym to wisdome and teache him Gods law,
For youth is frayle and easy to drawe,
By grace to goodnes; by nature to yll:
That nature hath ingrafted, is harde to kyll.

Nevertheles, in youth men may be best
Trayned to vertue by godly mean;
Vice may be so mortified and so suppress,
That it shall not breake furth, yet the roote wil remayn;
As in this enterlude by youth you shal se playne,
From his lust by *Good Counsell* brought to godly cō-
versation,
And shortly after to frayle natures inclination.

The enemy of mankynd *Sathan* through *Hypocrisy*
Fayned or chosen holiness of mans blind entent,
Forsakyng ² Gods word, that leadeth right way,
Is brought to *Fellowshyp* and ungracious company,

¹ And G.

² Forsakyn G.

† Gen. viii. Jer. xvii. Eccl. xxx.

To

To *Abhominable Living* till he be wholly bent,
And so to desperation if good counsell were not sent
From God, that in trouble doth no man forsake
That doth call, and trust in hym for *Christes* sake.

Finally, youth by Goddes special grace
Doth earnestly repent his *abhominable livinge*
By the doctrine of good counsell, and to his solace
Gods mercy entreth to him recitinge
Gods mercifull promises, as they be in writinge:
He beleveth and foloweth, to his great consolacyon.¹
All these partes ye shal se briefly played in their fashion.

1 *consolacion* L.

LUSTY JUVENTUS.

*Here entretb Lusty Juventus or Youth singing as
followeth.*

IN a herber grene aslepe ¹ where as I lay,
The byrdes fange swete in the middes of the daye;
I dreamed fast of myrth and play:
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure.

Methought I walked stil to and fro,
And from her company I could not go;
But when I waked it was not so:
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure.

Therfore my hart is surely pyght ²
Of her alone to have a sight,
Which is my joy and hartes delyght:
In youth is pleasure, in youth is pleasure.

Finis.

Lusty Juventus, or Youth, be speaketh.

What, how? Are they not here?
I am disappointed by the blessed masse;

¹ aslepe G.

² surely pyght G.

I had

I had thought to have found them making good chere :
 But now they are gone to some secret place.
 Wel, seing they are gone, I do not greatly passe ;
 Another time I wil hold them as much,
 Seing they breake ¹ promise, and kepe not the tweche.
 What shal I do now to passe away the day ?
 Is there any man here that wil go to game ?
 At whatsoever he ² wyl play,
 To make one I am redy to the same :
 Youth full of pleasure is my proper name.
 To be alone is not my appetie, ³
 For of all thinges in the world I love mery company.
 Who knoweth where is ere a mynstrell ?
 By the masse, I would fayne go daunce a fitte. †
 My companions ⁴ are at it, I know right well ;
 They do not all this whyle in a corner syt :
 Agaynst another time they have taught me ⁵ wytte :
 I beshrew theyr hartes for servyng me thys.
 I wylt go seke them, whether I hyt on myse.

*Here entreth Good Councel, to whom Youth yet
 speaketh.*

Well I met, father, well I met ;
 Dyd you heare anye mynstrels playe,
 As you came hetherward upon your way ?
 And if you dyd, I praye you wyshe ⁶ me thither.
 For I am going to seke them, and, in fayth, I know not
 whether.

¹ brake G. ² ye G. ³ appetyte L.
⁴ compacions G. ⁵ my G. ⁶ wysse L.

† The word fitte sometimes signified, a part or division of a song ; but in its original acceptation a poetick strain, verse, or poem : from being applied to musick, the word was easily transferred to dancing, as in the above passages.

See Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poetry*. Vol. II. p. 297.

Good

Good Counsel.

Syr, I wyl aske you a question by your favour,
What would you with the minstrell do?

Juventus.

Nothing but have a daunce or two,
To passe the tyme away in pleasure.

Good Counsel.

'If that be the matter, I promyse you sure,
I am the more soryer that it shoulde so be;
For there is no such passing the time appointed in the
scripture,

Nor yet therunto it doth not agre:
I wyshe that ye would so use your libertye,
To walke as you are bound to do,
Accordyng to the vocation whych God hath called you to.

Juventus.

Why, syr, are you angry because I have spoken so?
By the masse, it is alone for my apety.¹

Good Counsel.

Shewe me your name, I praye you hertely,
And then I wyll my mynde expresse.

Juventus.

My name is called *Juventus* doutles;
Say what you wyll, I wyll gyve you the hearinge.

Good Counsel.

For as much as God hath created you of nothyng,
Unto hys owne lykenes by spiritual illumynacyon,
It it unmete that ye shoulde leade your livynge
Contrary to hys godly determynacyon.
Saint *Paul* unto the *Ephesians* giveth good exhortacion,
Saying, walk circumspectly, redemyng the tyme;
That is, to spend it well, and not to wickednes encline.

Juventus.

No, no, hardely none of myne;
If I woulde live so straight you myght counte me a foole;
Let them kepe those rules whych are doctours dyvyne,
And have bene² brought up al theyr dayes in scole.

¹ apetyt L.² be G.*God*

124 LUSTY JUVENTUS.

Good Council.

Moses in the lawe exhorteth hys people,
As in the boke of *Deuteronomie* he doth plainly write,
That they should live obedient and thankefull;
For in effect: these wordes he doth reſite:
All ye thys day ſtand before the Lordes ſyght,
Both princes, rulers, elders, and parentes,
Children, wives, yong, and old, therefore obey his
commaundements.

Juventus.

I am to yonge to underſtand his documents;
Wherefore dyd al they ſtand before hys preſence?

Good Council.

To enter wyth God peace and alyauunce,
Promiſinge that they woulde him honour, feare, and ſerve:
All kynd of people were bound in thoſe covenantes,
That from hys lawe they ſhuld never ſwarve;
For God uſeth no percialitie.

Juventus.

What, am I bound as wel as the cleargy,
To learne and folow his preceptes and lawe?

Good Council.

Yea, ſurely, or els God will withdrawe
His mercy from you, promiſed in his covenant;
For, except you live under his obedience and awe,
How can you receive the benefites of his teſtament?
For he that ſubmitteth hym ſelfe to be a ſervant,
And his maſters commaundement wil not fulſil nor
regard,
According as he hath done, is worthy his reward.

Juventus.

It is as true a ſaying as ever I heard;
Therefore your name, I pray you now, tell,
For, by my truth, your communication I like wonders &
well.

1 For inſtead G.

2 that omitted G.

3 you omitted G.

4 wondres.

Good

*Good Councell.*My name is called *Good Councell*.*Yuventus.**Good Councell?*

Now, in fayth, I cry you mercy:
 I am fory, that I have you thus offended;
 But, I pray you, beare wyth me patiently,
 And my misse behavvour shal be amended:
 I know, my time I have rudely spende,
 Folowying my owne lust, being led by ignorance;
 But now I hope of better knowlege through your
 acquaintaunce.

Good Councell.

I pray God guide you with his gracious assistans
 Unto the knowleg of his truth, your ignorance to
 unde,
 That you may be one of these numbred christians
 Which foloweth the lambe whether he doth go,
 The lambe *Jesus Christ*, my meaning is so;
 By sure fayth and confidence in his bitter death and
 passyon,
 The only pryce of our health and salvacion.

Yuventus.

Syr, I thanke you for your herty oratyon:
 And now, I pray you, shewe me your advisement,
 How I may live in thys my vocacyon,
 According to Goddes wil and commaundement.

Good Councell.

First of all, it is most expedient,
 That you exercise your selfe in continual prayer,
 That it might please the Lorde omnipotent
 To send unto you his hely spirit and comforter,
 Which wyl leade you every daye and houre
 Unto the knowledge of hys word and veritie;
 Wherin you may learne to live most christianly.

Yuventus.

126 L U S T Y J U V E N T U S.

Juventus. He kneleth.

O Lord, graunt me of thy infinite ¹ mercy
 The true knowlege of thy ² lawe and wyll,
 And illumine my heart with spirit continually,
 That I may ³ be apte thy holy preceptes to fulfyl;
 Strengthen me, that I may perseuer stil
 Thy commaundementes to obaye:
 And then shal I never slip nor fall away. [*He riseth.*

Good Councell.

Ful true be these wordes, which *Christ* himselfe did say,
 He that seketh shal surely finde.

Knowledge entreth.

Beholde, youth; now rejoyce we may,
 For I se *Knowledge of God* † *veritie* stand here behinde:
 He is come now to satisfye your minde
 In those thynges which you wil desire;
 Therefore, together let us approche him nere.

Juventus.

A! *Good Councell*, now ⁴ it doth appere,
 That God never rejecteth the humbles petition.

Knowledge.

Now the Lorde blesse you al with his heavenly bene-
 diction,
 And with his fyery love your heartes enflame,
 That of his mercifull promises you may have the fruition,
 The subtiltie of the devill utterly to defame.
 Now, good christian audience, I wyl expresse my name,
 The true knowlege of Gods *veritie*, this ⁵ mi name doth
 hyghte,
 Whom God hath appoynted to geve the blind their sight.

¹ *infinite* L.

² *the* G.

³ *way* G.

⁴ *new* G.

⁵ *thus* G.

† Both the copies read *God*.

Good

Good Councel.

Al praye be given to that Lord of myght,
Which hath appointed you hether at this present houre;
For, I trust, you will so instruct youth aright,
That he shall lyve accordynge to Gods pleasure.

Juventus.

And I thanke *Jesus Christ* my saviour,
That he is come to my company.

Knowledge.

I thanke you, my frendes, most hartely
For your gentill salutation.

Juventus.

Sir, I wyl be so bold by your deliberation,
To open my mynd unto you nowe,
Trustyng that, by your good exhortation,
I shal learne those thynges which I never knew:
This one thyng chiefly I would learne of you,
How I may my life in this my vocation leade,
According as God hath ordeyned and decrede.

Knowledge.

The prophet *David* saith, that the man is blessed,
Which doth exerceyse him selfe in the lawe of the Lord,
And doth not folow the way of the wicked;
As the fyrst psalm doth playnly recorde:¹
The fourscore and xiiii psalme therunto doth accorde;
Blessed is the man whom thou teachest, O Lord, saith he,
To learne thy² lawe, preceptes, worde or veritie.

And *Christ* in the gospell sayth manifestly,
Blessed is he which heareth the word of God and kepeth it;
That is, to believe his word, and live accordingly,
Declairing the fayth by the fruites of the spirite,
Whose fruites are these, as *S. Paul* to the *Galatbi* doth
write,

Love, joye, peace, long suffering, and faithfulness.
Mekenes, goodnes, temperaunce, and gentilnes.

¹ accorde G.

² the G.

Good Councel.

By 1 these wordes, which unto you he doth expresse,
 He teacheth that you ought to have a stedfast faith;
 Without the which 2 it is impossible doubtlesse
 To please God, as saint *Paul* sayth:
 Where faith is not, godly living decayeth;
 For whatsoever is not of faith, saith *S. Paul*, is sine,
 But where a perfite faith is, there is good working.

Juventus.

It seemeth to me, that this is 4 your meaning, —
 That, when I observe Gods commaundementes and the
 workes of charite,
 They shall prevail unto me nothing,
 Except I beleve to be saved therby.

Knowledge.

No, no, you are deceyved very blyndly;
 For faith in *Chrystes* merites doth onely justify,
 And make us righteous in Goddes sight.

Juventus.

Why should I then in good 4 workes delight,
 Scing I shall not be saved by them?

Good Councel.

Because they are required of all christian men,
 As the necessary fruites of true repentance.

Knowledge.

But the reward of the heavenly inheritance
 Is given us through fayth, for *Chryste* deserving;
 As *S. Paul* declareth in the iiii chapter to the *Romains*,
 Therefore we ought not to worke as hirelinges:
 Seing *Chryst* hath purged us once from al our wicked,
 living,

Let us no more wallow therin,
 But persever, like good branches, bearing frute in him.

1 *Be. G.*2 *the which* omitted *G.*3 *is* omitted *G.*4 *god* *L.**Juventus.*

Juventus.

Now I know where about you have bene:
My elders never taught me so before.

Good Council.

Though your elders wer blind, dout not you therfore;
For saint *Peter* sayth, vaine is the conversations
Which ye receive by your elders tradicions.

Juventus.

I will gladly receive your godly admonicions:
But yet, I pray you, shewe me the cause,
That they, being men of great discretions,
Dyd not instructe me in Gods lawes,
Accordynge to hys wyll and ordynaunce.

Knowledge.

Bycause they themselves were wrapped in ignoraunce,
Being deceyved by false preachers.

Juventus.

O Lord, delyver me from wicked teachers,
That I be not deceyved wyth theyr false doctrine.

Good Council.

To Gods word you must only encline;
All other doctrine cleane set a parte.

Juventus.

Surely, that I wyll from the bottome of my heart;
And I thanke the living God which hath geven me the
knowledge

To know his doctrine from the false and pervarte,¹
I being yet yonge and full tender of age;
And that he hath made me partaker of the heavenly
inheritage,

Of his owne² mercy, and not of my deservynge,
For hell I have deserved by my sinfull workynge.

I know ryght well, my elders and parentes
Have, of a longe tyme, deceyved be
Wyth blynd hipocrisy and superflitious ententes,
'Trustyng in theyr owne workes, which is nothyng but
vanitie;

Their steppes shall not be folowed for me :
 Therfore I pray you, shew me a brieft conclusyon,
 How I ought to lyve in christyan religyon.

Knowledge.

The first beginning of wisdom, as saith the wise *Salomon*,
 Is, to feare God wyth al thy ¹ heart and power ;
 And then thou must beleve al his promyses without any
 exception,
 And that he wyll performe them both constante and
 sure :

And then, because he is thy onely saviour,
 Thou must love him wyth al thy soule and mynde,
 And thy neighbour as thy self, because he hath so assured.

Juventus.

To love my neighbour as my self? I cannot be. so
 kind :

I praye you tell me, what meane you ?

Knowledge.

My meaninge is, as *Christe* sayth in the sixt chapter of
Matbew, 3

To do to him as you would be done to.

Juventus.

I pray God geve me grace so for to do,
 That unto his will I may be obedient.

Good Counsel.

Here you shall receive *Christes* testament
 To comfort your conscience, when nede shall require,
 To learne the contentes therof, se that you be diligent ;
 The which all christian men ought to desyre,
 For it is the well, or fountayne most clere,
 Out of the which doth spring swete consolation
 To all those which ⁴ thirst after eternal salvation.

Knowledge.

Therin shall you fynd most holsome preservatyon
 Both in troubles, persecutions, sicknes, and adversitie,

¹ they G.

² to G.

³ chap. *Matb.* G.

⁴ that G.

And a sure defence in the tyme of temptacion,
 Agaynst whóm the devill cannot prevail with al his army:
 And, if you persever therin unfainedly,
 It wyll set your heart at such quietnes and rest,
 Whych can ¹ never be turned wyth stormes nor tempest.

Good Counsel.

Wyth this thing you must neither flatter nor jest,
 But stedfastly beleve it every day and houre,
 And let your conversation openly protest,
 That of your heart it is the most precious treasure:
 And then, your godly example shall other men procure
 To learne and exercyse the same also.
 I pray God strengthen you so for to do.

Juventus.

Now for this godly knowlege which you have brought
 me to,

I beseeche the living God to ² reward you agayne:
 From your companye I wyl never depart nor go,
 So long as in this lyfe I do remayne;
 For in thys boke I se manifest and playne,
 That he, that foloweth his owne lustes and imagination,
 Kepeth the redy path to everlast dampnation:

And he that leadeth ³ a godly conversation
 Shall be brought ⁴ to suche quietnes, joy, and peace,
 Which in comparison passeth all worldly gloriation,
 Which cannot endure, but shortly cease.
 Both the time and houre I may now blesse,
 That I met with you, father, *Good counsell*,
 To bring me to the knowlege of this ⁵ hevenly gossell.

Knowledge.

This your profession I lyke very well,
 So that you entend to live accordyng;
 I pray God, your living do not rebell,

¹ cannot G.

² to omitted G.

³ leadete G.

⁴ borught G.

⁵ his G.

132 LUSTY JUVENTUS.

But ever agre unto your saying, ¹
 That, when ye shall make accountes or rekenyng,
 Of this talent which you have receyved,
 You may be one of those, with whom the Lord shal be
 pleased.

Good Councel.

For this converfacion of youth the Lords name be
 praised :

Let us now depart for a ceason. [Exit.

Knowledge.

To geve God the glory it is convenient and reason :
 If you wil depart, I wyl not tary. [Exit.

Juventus.

And I wil never forsake your company,
 While I live in this world. [Exit. ²

Here entreth the Devill.

Oh, oh ! al to late !

I trow this geare wil come to naught ;
 For, I perceyve, my power doth abate,
 For all the policie that ever I have wrought :
 Many and fundry waies I have fought,
 To have the word of God deluded utterly ;
 Oh, for sorow ! yet it will not be.

I have done the best that I can,
 And my minifters also in every place,
 To rote it clene from the heart of man ;
 And yet for all that it florisheth apace :
 I am fore in drede to shew my face,
 My auctoritie and workes are fo greatly dispised,
 My inventions, and al that ever I have devised.

Oh, oh, ful well I know the cause
 That my estimation doth thus decay ;
 The olde people would beleve stil in my lawes,

¹ *fayng G.*

² [Exit omitted G.

But

But the yonger sort leade them a contrary way ;
They wyll not beleve, they playnly fay,
In old traditions and made by men,
But they wyll lyve as the scripture teacheth them.

Out I crie upon them, they do me open wrong,
To bring up theyr children thus in knowlage ;
For, if they wil not folow my waies when they are yong,
It is hard turning them when they come to age :
I must nedes fynd some meanes this matter to swage ;
I meane to turne theyr heartes from the scripture quyte,
That in carnall plesures they may have more delight.

Well, I will go tast to enfect this youth
Through the entisement of my sonne *Hypocrisie*,
And worke some proper feate to stop his mouth,
That he may lede his life carnally :
I had never more nede my matters to apply.
Oh, my chylde *Hypocrisie*, where art thou ?
I charge the of my blessing appere before me now.

Here entresth Hypocrisye.

Hypocrisye.

Oh, oh, quod ha, kepe agayne the sowe ;
I come as fast as I can, I warrant you :
Where is he, that hath the sowe to sell ?
I wil geve him money, if I lyke her well ;
Whether it be sowe or hogge, I do not greatly care,
For, by my occupacion, I am a bochare.

Devel.

O my child, how doest thou fare ?

Hypocrisye.

Santi amen, who have we there ?
By the masse, I wil bie none of thy ware ;
Thou art a chapman for the devil.

Devel.

What, my son, canst thou not tell,
Who is here, and what I am ?
I am thine owne father, *Sathan*.

Hipocrisie.

Be you so, fir? I crye you mercy than;
You may say, I am homely, and lacke learnynge,
To lyken my fathers voyce unto a fowes groning:
But, I pray you, shew me the cause, and why,
That you called me hether so hastily.

Devel.

A! *Hipocrisie*, I am undone uttery.

Hipocrisie.

Utterly undone! nay, stop there hardely;
For I my selfe do know the contrary
By dayly experience:
Do not I yet raigne abrode?
And as long as I am in the worlde,
You have som treasure and substaunce.

I suppose I have bene the flower
In setting furth thy lawes and power
Without any delay:
By the masse, if I had not bene,
Thou haddest not benne worthe a *Flaunders* pin,
At thys present day.

The time were to longe nowe to declare,
How many and great the number are,
Which have desceived be;
And brought cleane from Gods lawe
Unto thy yoke and awe,
Through the intisement of me.

I have bene busyed since the world began,
To graffe thy lawes in the heart of man,
Where they ought to be refused:
And I have so mingled Gods commaundements
Wyth vaine zeales, and blynd entents,
That they be greatly abused.

I set up great ydolatry
With al kynd of filthy sodometry,
To geve mankynd a fall:
And I brought up fuche supersticion,
Under the name of holynes and religyon,

That disceyved almoste all.

As, holy cardinals, holy popes,
 Holy vestiments, holy copes,
 Holy armettes, and friers,
 Holy prieffes, holy bisshopes,
 Holy monkes, holy abbottes,
 Yea, and al obstinate lyers :

Holy pardons, holy beades,
 Holy faintes, holy images,
 With holy, holy bloud,
 Holy stockes, holy stones,
 Holy cloughtes, holy bones;
 Yea, and holy holy wood.

Holy skinner, holy bulles,
 Holy rochettes, and coules,
 Holy crouches, and staves,
 Holy hoodes, holy cappes,
 Holy miters, holy hattes;
 A good holy holy knaves.

Holy dayes, holy fastinges,
 Holy twitching, holy tastynges,
 Holy visions and fightes,
 Holy waxe, holy leade,
 Holy water, holy breade,
 To drive away spirites.

Holy fyre, holy palme,
 Holy oyle, holy creame,
 And holy ashes also;
 Holy brouches, holy rynges,
 Holy knelinge, holy senfynges,
 And a hundred trim trams mo.

Holy crosse, holy belles,
 Holy reliques, holy jouels,
 Of mine owne invencion;
 Holy candels, holy tapers,
 Holy parchmentes, holy papers:
 Had not you a holy sonne?

1 *abstinate* G.

2 *bole* G.

Deryl.

Devyl.

All these thynges, which thou hast done,
 My honour and lawes hath maintayned:
 But now, oh alas! one thinge is begune,¹
 By the which my kingdome is greatly decayed;
 I shal lese al, I am sore affrayde:
 Excepte thy helpe, I know right playne,
 I shall never be able to recover it againe.

Gods word is so greatly spronge up in youth,
 That he litle regardeth my lawes or me;
 He telleth his parentes that is very truth,
 That they of long time have deceyved be:
 He sayth, according to *Chrystas* veritye,
 All his doinges he wil ordre and frame,
 Mortifying the fleshe with the lustes of the same.

Hipocrisy.

A, fyrra, there beginneth the game;
 What, is *Juventus* become so tame,
 To be a newe gospeller?

Devill.

As fast, as I do make, he doth marre;
 He hath² folowed so longe the steppes of *Good Counsel*,
 That *Knowledge* and he together doth dwel;
 For who is so busye in every place as *Youth*,
 To reade and declare the manifest truth?
 But, oh! *Hipocrisy*, if thou could stoppe his mouth,
 Thou shuldest wyn my hart for ever.

Hipocrisie.

What would you have me to do in the matter?
 Shew me therin your advisement.

Devyl.

I would have the go incontinent,
 And worke some crafty³ feate or polycye,
 To set *Knowledge* and him at contraverbye;
 And his company thy selfe greatly use,
 That Gods word he may clene abuse.

¹ begone G.² that G.³ craft L.
Hipocrisy.

Hipocrisye.

At your request I wyl not refuse,
To do that thyng, which in me doth lye:
Dout ye not, but I wyll excuse
Those thynges, which he doth playnly deny;
And I wyll handle my matters so craftely,
That, ere he commeth to mannes state,
Gods word and his living shalbe cleane at the bate.

Devil.

Thou shalt have my blessing both early and late;
And, bycause thou shalt al my counsel kepe,
Thou shalt call thy name, *Frendshyp.*

Hipocrisye.

By the masse, it is a name full mete
For my proper and amyable person.

Devil.

Oh, farewell, farewell, my sonne;
Spede thy business, for I must be gone.

[*Exit.* 2

Hipocrisye.

I warrant you, let me alone.—
I will be wyth *Juventus* anone,
And that, ere he be ware;
And, I wyffe, if he walke not streight,
I wyll use such a sleight,
That shall trap him in a snare.

How shall I bringe this geare to passe?
I can tell now, by the masse,
Without any more advysement:
I wyl infect hym wyth wicked company,
Whose conversation shal be so fleshly,
Yea, able to overcome an innocent.

Thys wicked *Felowshep.*
Shall hym company kepe
For a while:

1 my G.

2 [*Exit* omitted G.]

And

And then I wyll brynge in
Abhorrible * *Lyvyng*
 Hym to beguile.
 Wyth wordes fayre I wyll hym tyse,
 Tellyng hym of a gyrlc nyse,
 Which shall hym somewhat move;
Abhorrible Livinge though she be,
 Yet he shall no other wayes se,
 But she is for to love.

She shall him procure,
 To lyve in pleasure,
 After his owne phantesy;
 And my matter to frame,
 I wyll call her name
Unknown Honesty.

This will I convey,
 My matter I say,
 Somewhat handsomely;
 That, through wicked *Fellowship*,
 And false pretende frendship,
 Youth shal lyve carnally.

Trudge, *Hypocrisie*, trudge;
 Thou art a good drudge,
 To serve the devill:
 If thou shouldest lye and lurke,
 And not entende thy worke,
 Thy maister should do ful evill.

* Abhorrible. So the word is constantly spelt. It is worth remarking, in order to fix the adjustment of a passage in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act. IV. S. 1. This is abhorrible which he would call abominable. Capell's edit. nearly agreeable to the Quartos—or, This is abominable which we would call abhorrible. So Théobald and Hanmer according to the Folios. The two great and learned editors Warburton and Johnson read vice versa: This is abominable which he would call abhorrible—which destroys the poet's humour, such as it is, who is laughing at such fanatical phantasms and rackers of orthography as affect to speak fine.

*Here entreth Youth to whom Hypocrisye yet
speaketh.*

What, mayster *Youth*?
Wel I met, by my truth;
And whether away?
You are the last man,
Which I talked¹ on,
I sware, by thys day.
Methought, by your face,
Ere you came in place,
It should be you:
Therfore I dyd abyde,
Here in this tyde,²
For your comming, this is true.

Juventus.

For your gentlenes, syr, most hertely I thanke you,
But yet you must hold me somewhat excused;
For to my symple knowledge, I never knewe,
That you and I together were acquainted:
But nevertheles, if you do it renew,
Old acquaintaunce wil sone³ be remembred.

Hypocrisye.

Ah, nowe I se well, *Youth* is fethered,
And his crums he hath well gathered,
Since I spake with him last;
A pore mans tale can not now be herd,
As in tymes past.

I crye you mercy, I was sumwhat bolde,
Thinking, that your mastership would
Not have bene so straunge;
But now I perceyve, that promotion
Causeth⁴ both man, maners and fashion
Greatly for to chaunge.

¹ called G.

³ some G.

² Here in this tide omitted G.

⁴ causeth G.

Juventus.

Juventus.

You are to blame this me to calenge;
For, I thinke, I am not he, which you take me for.

Hipocrisie.

Yes, I have knowen you ever since you were bore;
Your age is yet under a score,
Which I can well remember:
I wisse, I wisse, you and I,
Many a time have bene ful mery,
When you wer yong and tender.

Juventus.

Then I praye you, ¹ let us reason no lenger;
But fyrst, shew your nominacion.

Hipocrisie,

Of my name to make declaracyon,
Wythout any dissimulacion,
I am called *Frendshyp*:
Although I be simple, and rude of fashion,
Yet by linage and generacion,
I am nie kin to your masterstyp.

Juventus.

What, *Frendshyp*?

I am glad to se, that you be mery;
By my truth, I had almost you forgot,
By long absence brought out of memory.

Hipocrisy.

By the masse, I love you so hartely,
That there is none so welcome to my company:
I pray you, tel me whether are you going?

Juventus.

My entention is, to go here a preachinge.

Hipocrisie.

A preaching, quod ha? ah, good litle one,
By *Christ*, she wil make you cry out of the wyning,
If you folow her instructions ² so early in the morning.

Juventus.

Full great I do abhorre this your wycked sayinge:

¹ you omitted G.

² instruction G.

For,

For, no dout, they encrease much finne and vice :
Therefore I pray you, show not your meanyng,
For I delight not in such folythe fantasies.

Hipocrisye.

Surely, then you are the more unwysc :
You may have a spyrt amongst them now and then ;
Why should not you, as well as other men ?

Juventus.

As for those fylthy doinges : I utterly detest them ;
I will heare no more of your wycked communycacyon.

Hipocrisye.

If I may be so bold by your deliberation
What wyl you do at a preaching ?

Juventus.

Learne some holsome and godly teaching,
Of the true minister of *Chrystes* gospell.

Hipocrisye.

Tush, what he will say, I know ryght well ;
He wyl say, that God is a good man,*
He can make him no better, and say the best he can.

Juventus.

I know that, but what then ?
The more that Gods word is preached and taught,
The greater the occasion is to al christen men,
To forsake their sinful livinges both wicked, vile, and
naught :
And to repeat their former evils, which they have
wrought,

1 *As for al those fylthe doinges G.*

* God is a good man. Shakespeare puts these words, "with great humour," into the mouth of Dogberry, in *Much ado about Nothing*. Act. III. S. 8. Though the Quartos and Folios concur in this reading, the moderns uniformly read, He's a good Man. N. B. The old reading is restored by Mr. Capell.

The author seems here to ridicule the blasphemous questions discussed by the schoolmen among the papists in his time : as, Whether the pope be God or man, or a mean betwixt both ? &c. See Archbishop Whitgift's sermon before queen Eliz. 1574. Sig. B 2.

Trusting

Trusting by *Christes* death to be redemed :
And he, that thys doth, shall never be disceived.

Hipocrisye.

Well sayd, maister doctör, well sayd ;
By the masse, we must have you into the pulpyt :
I pray you be remembred, and cover your head ;
For indede you have nede to kepe in your wyt :
A, sirra, who would have thought it,
That youth had bene such a well learned man !
Let me se your portous, * gentle sir *Ibon*.

Juventus.

No, it is not a boke for you : to loke on
You ought not to jest with God's testament.

Hipocrisye.

What, man ? I pray you be content ;
For I do nothyng els, but say my phantasie :
But yet, if you would do after my advisement,
In that matter you should not be so busy ;
Was not your father as well learned, as ye ?
And if he had sayd then as you have now done,
I wisse, he had bene like to make a burne.

Juventus.

It were muche better for me, then to returne
From my faith in *Christe*, and the profession of his worde.

Hipocrisye.

Whether is better, a halter or a corde,
I can not tel ; I sweare by Goddes mother :
But I thinke ² you wil have the one or the other :
Wil you lose al your frendes good wyll,
To continue in that opinion still ?
Was there not as wel learned men before as now ?
Yea, and better to, I may say to you ;

1 you omitted,

2 thyng G.

* Portous, the ancient name for a Breviary. Blount. Here it signifies the bible.

And

And they taught ¹ the yonger sort of people
By the elders to take an example:
And if I did not love you as nature doth me bynde,
You should not know so muche of my mynde.

Juventus.

Whether were ² I better, to be ignoraunt and blynd,
And to be dampned in hell for infidelitie;
Or to learne godly knowledge, wherin I shall fynde
The right path way to eternal felicitie?

Hypocrisye.

Can you denie, but it is your duetie,
Unto your elders to be obedient?

Juventus.

I graunt, I am bound to obey my parentes,
In all thinges honest and lawfull.

Hypocrisye.

Lawfull, quod ha? a, foole, foole!
Wylt ³ thou set men to scoole,
When they be olde?
I may say to you secretly,
The world was never mery,
Since children were so bolde:
Now every boy wyl be a teacher,
The father a foole, and the chyld a preacher;
This is preaty geare:
The foule presumption ⁴ of youth
Wyl turne shortly to great ruth,
I feare, I feare, I feare.

Juventus.

The sermone wil be done ere I can come there:
I care not greatly whether I go or no;
And yet for my promise, by God I sweare,
There is no remedy but I must nedes go:
Of my companions there wyl be mo,
And I promysed them by Goddes grace,
To mete them there as the sermon was.

¹ thought G.

² where L.

³ wil G.

⁴ The foole presumptuous G.

Hypocrisye.

Hypocrisy.

For once breakyng promise do not you passe,
 Make some excuse the matter to cease,
 What have they to do?
 And you and I were, I wote¹ where,
 We would be as mery, as there,
 Yea, and meryer to.

Juventus.

I would gladly in your company go;
 But, if my companions should chauce to se,
 They would report full evyl by me:
 And, peradventure, if I should² it use,
 My company they would cleane refuse.

Hypocrisy.

What, are those felowes so curyous,
 That your selfe you cannot excuse?
 I wyll teache you the matter to convey;
 Do what your own lust, and say, as they say;
 And, if you be reprov'd with your owne affinitie,
 Byd them plucke the beame out of their owne eye:
 The old popish priestes mocke and despise,
 And the ignoraunt people, that beleve their lyes;
 Call them papistes, hypocrites, and joyning of the plough;
 Face³ out the matter, and then good ynough:
 Let your booke at your gyrdle be tyed,
 Or els in your bosome that he may be spyed;
 And then, it wyl be sayd both with youth and age,
 Yonder felow hath an excellent knowledge.
 Tusshc, tusshc!
 I could so beate⁴ the busshc,
 That all shuld be flusshc,
 That ever I dyd.

Juventus.

Now, by my truth, you are merely disposed;
 Let us go thether, as you thynke best.

¹ I wote wote where G.

² would G.

³ Fare' G.

⁴ beare G.

Hipocrisye.

How saye you, shal we go to breakefast?
Will you go to the pye feast?
Or, by the masse, if thou wilt be my gest,
It shal cost the nothyng;
I have a furny carde in a place,
That wil bare a turne besides the ace,
She purvyes now apace
For my commynge:
And if thou wilt jybbberd,¹ as well as I,
We shal have mery company;
And, I warraunt the, yf we have not a pye,
We shal have a puddinge.

Juventus.

By the masse, that meate I love above al thyng;
You may drawe me aboute the toune with a puddynge.†

Hipocrisye.

Then you shal se my cunnyng:
A poore shyft for a livinge
Amongest poore men used is;
The kynde hart of hyrs
Hath eased my purse,
Many a time ere this.

¹ *fybbere G.*

† This passage will receive illustration from the following quotation out of bishop Latimer's sermon preached before K. Edward the 6th, about the year 1550. "A good fellowe on a tyme bad another of his frendes to a breakefast, and sayed: Yf you wyll come, you shal be welcome; but I tell you afore hande, you shal have but slender fare, one dysh and that is all. What is that, sayed he? A puddynge and nothyng els. Mary, sayed he, you cannot please me better; of all meates that is for myne owne tooth: you may draw me round aboute the town with a pudding." Sig. G vii.

Here entreth Fellowship.

Fellowship.

I mervayle gretly where *Friendshyp* is;
He promised to mete me here care this tyme:
I beshrew his heart, that his ¹ promis doth mys;
And then be ye sure, it shall not be mine.

Hypocrisy.

Yes, *Fellowshyp*, that it shalbe thine,
For I have taried here this hour or twayne,
And this honest gentilman in my company hath bene,
To abide your comming, this thing is playne.

Fellowshyp.

By the masse, if you chydc, I will ² be gone agayne;
For, in fayth, *Friendshyp*, I may say to thee,
I love not to be there, where chiders be.

Hypocrisy.

No, God it knoweth, you are as ful of honesty,
As a mary bone is ful of honey:
But, fyrre, I pray you, bid this gentilman welcome,
For he is desirous in your company to come:
I tell you, he is a man of the ryght making;
And one that hath excellent lernynge;
At his gyrdle he hath such a boke,
That the *Poppyshe* priestes dare not in hym loke:
This is a fellow for the nones.

Fellowship.

I love him the better by Gods ³ precious bones: —
You are hertely welcome, as I may saye,
I shall desyre you of better acquaintance; †
That of your company be bolde I maye,
You may be sure if in me it lye
To do you pleasure you should it fynde:
For, by the masse, I love you, both with hert and mynde.

¹ *thy*: G.

² *wylt* L.

³ *dogs* L.

† *This mode of expression occurs in Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream. Act III. Sc. 3. needlessly altered by some to, — I shall desire of you more acquaintance.*

Juventus.

Juventus.

To say the same to you, your gentlenes doth me bynde;
And I thanke you hertely for your kindnes.

Hipocrysie:

Wyl you se thys gentylman fynes,
Your gentilnes, and your kyndnes,
I thanke him, and I thanke you;
And, I thynke, if the truth were sought,¹
The one bad, and the other naught,
Never a good, I make God a vow:
But yet, *Fellowshyp*, tel me one thing,
Dyd you se litle *Besse* this morning?
We should have our breakfast yester night she sayde,
But she hath forgotten it now, I am a frayd.

Fellowshyp.

Her promise shalbe perfourmed and payd;
For I spake with her, synce the time I rose,
And then she told me how the matter goeth:
We must be with her betwene eight and nine,
And then her maister and mystres wyl be at the
preaching.

Juventus.

I purposed my selfe there to have bene;
But this man provoked me to the contrary,
And told me, that we shuld have mery company.

Fellowshyp.

Mery, quod ha? we can not chuse but be mery;
For there is such a gyrl, where as we go,
Which wil make us to² be mery, whether we will or no.

Hipocrysie.

The ground is the better, on the which she doth go;
For she will make better chere with that³ litle, which
she can get,
Then many a⁴ one can with a great banket of meat.

¹ *wer sought* G.

² *to* omitted G.

³ *a* G.

⁴ *a* omitted G.

Juventus.

To be in her company my hart is set ;
 Therefore I pray you, let us be gone.

Fellowship.

She will come for us : her selfe anone ;
 For I told her before, where we would stande,
 And then, she sayd, she would becke us with her hande.

Juventus.

Now, by the masse, I perceyve, that she is a gallaunde :
 What, wyl she take paynes to come for us hether ?

Hipocrisy.

Yea, I warrant you ; therefore you must be famylier
 with her :

When she commeth in place,
 You must her embrace,
 Somwhat hansomlye ;
 Leste she thinke it ² daunger,
 Because you are a straunger,
 To come in your companye.

Juventus.

Yea, * by Gods foote, that I wyl be busye,
 And I may saye to you, I can play the knave secretly.

Here entretb Abhominable Living. †

Abhominable Living.

Hem ! come away quickly,
 The backe dore is open ; 3 I dare not tarry : —
 Come, *Fellowship*, come on a waye.

Hipocrisy.

What, *Unknowen Honesty* ? a worde ;

1 for us omitted G.

2 she thinketh danger G.

3 opned G.

* Yea, &c. These two lines I have given to Juventus against the authority of the copies.

† The entrance of Abhominable Living is not marked in the copies.

You

You shal not go yet, by God I sweare;
Here is none but your frindes, you nede not to fraie,
Although this straunge yonge gentylman be here.

Juventus.

I trust, in me she wyl thynke no daunger;
For I love wel the company of fayre women.

Abominable Living.

Who, you? nay ye are suche a holy man,
That to touche one ye dare not be bolde;
I thynke, you would not kisse a yonge woman,
If one would give you twenty pound in goulde.

Juventus.

Yes, by the masse, that I would;
—I could fynde in my hert to kisse you in your smocke.

Abominable Living.

My backe is brode enough to bare awaye that mocke;
For one hath tolde me many a time,
That you have said you wold use no such wantons
company as myne.

Juventus.

By dogs † precious woundes, that was som whorson 3
villain;

I wyll never eate meate that shal do me good,
Tyl I have cut his fleshe, by gogs 4 precyous blud:
Tell me, I praye you, who it was,
And I wyl trim the knave, by the blessed masse.

Abominable Living.

Tush! as for that, do not you passe;
That which I tolde you was but for love.

Hipocrisie.

She did nothing else but prove,
Whether a litle 5 thinge would you move

1 thyng G.

2 iou G.

3 borson G.

4 gods G.

5 lile L.

† Both the copies concur in this reading.

K 3

To

150 LUSTY JUVENTUS.

To be angry and frette;
 What, and if one had sayed so?
 Let such triflyng matters go,
 And be good to mens flesh for al that.

Juventus. He kisseth.

To kyffe her since she came I had cleane forgot: —
 You are welcome to my company.

Abominable Living.

Syr, I thanke you most hartely;
 By your kindnes it doth apere.

Hipocrisye.

What a hurly burly is here!
 Smicke smacke, and all this gere!
 You will to ticke tacke,¹ I fere,
 If you² had time:
 Well, wanton, well;
 I wyffe, I can tel,
 That such smocke smell
 Will set your nose out of tune.

Abominable Living.

What, man? you pede not to fume,
 Seing he is come into my company now;
 He is as well welcome as the best of you;
 And if it lye in me to do him plesure,
 He shal have it you may ye sure.

Fellowship.

Then old acquaintance is cleane out of favour:
 Lo, *Frendshyp*, this geare goth with a sleight;³
 He hath driven us twayne out of conceite.]

Hipocrisye.

Out of conceite, quod ha? no, no;
 I dare wel saye, she thynketh not so: —
 How say you, *Unknewen Honestie*?
 Do not you love *Fellowship* and me?

¹ take G,

² thou G.

³ affleight G.

Abominable

Abominable Livyng.

Ye, by the masse, I love you al thre;
But yet in dede, yf I should say the truth,
Amongest al other — welcome, mayster *Youth*.

Juventus.

Ful greatly I do delight to kisse your plesaunt mouth:

[*He kisseth* Abhom. Liv.

I am not able your kyndnes to recompence;
I long to talke with you secretly, therefore let us go hence.

Abominable Livyng.

I agre to that; for I would not for twenty pence, †
That it were knowne where I have bene.

Hipocrisye.

What, and it were knowne? it is no deadly 1 synne:
As for my parte, I do not greatly care,
So that they fynd not your proper buttockes bare.

Abominable Lyvvyng.

Now much fye upon you; how baudi 2 you are!
I wosse, Frendship, it mought 3 have been spoken at
twise:

What thinke you, for your saying, that the people wil
furmise?

Juventus.

Who dare be so bold, us to despise?
And if I may heare a knave speake one worde,
I wyll runne thorow his chekes with my sword.

Fellowship.

This is an ernest fellow of Gods worde;
Se, I pray you, how he is disposed to fyghte.

Juventus.

Why, should I not, and if my cause be ryght?
What, and if a knave do me begyle,

1 it where no daly G.

2 badi G.

3 mouth G.

† I agre to that; &c. this and the following line is given to Juventus in
Mr. G.'s copy.

No,

Shal I stand crouching like an owle?
 No, no; then you might count me a very cowe;
 I knowe what belongeth to Gods lawe as well as you.

Abominable Lying.

Your wit therin greatly I do allowe;
 For and yf I were a man, as you are,
 I would not sticke to geve a blowe,
 To teache other knaves to beware,
 I beshrew you twise and if you do spare,
 But lay lode on the fleshe, what so ever befal,
 You have strength inough to do it with all.

Fellowship.

Let us depart, and if that we shall;
 Come on, maisters, we twayne will go before.

Juventus.

Nay, nay, my frynde, stoppe there;
 It is not you, that shall have her awaye,
 She shall go with me, and if she go to daye.

Hipocrisie.

She will go with none of you, I dare well saye;

Abominable Living.

To forsake any of your company I wold be very
 loth;
 Therfore I will folow you all thre.

Hipocrisie.

Now I beshrew his herte, that to that wil not agree;
 But yet because the time shal not seme very longe,
 Or care we departe let us have a mery songe.

i Shall G.

They

They synge as foloweth.

WHY should not youth fulfyl his owne mynde,
As the course of nature doth him bynde?
Is not every thyng ordayned to do his kinde?
Report me to you, reporte me to you.

Do not the flouers sprynge freshe and gaye,
Plesaunt and swete in the month of *1* *Maye*?
And when their time cometh, they fayde awaye.
Report me to you, reporte me to you.

Be not the trees in wynter bare?
Like unto their kynde, such they are;
And when they springe, their fruites declare.
Report me to you, reporte me to you.

What should youth do with the fruites of age,
But live in pleasure in hys *2* passage?
For when age commeth, his lustes wyll swage.
Report me to you, report me to you.

Why shuld not youth fulfyl his owne mynde,
As the course of nature doth hym bynde? &c.

They go furth.

1 of omitted G.

2 thys G.

Here

Here entretb Good Councell.

O merciful Lord, who can cease to lamente,
Or kepe his hart from continual mournynge,
To se how *Youth* is fallen from thy word and testament,¹
And wholly enclined to *Abominable Livings*!
He lyveth nothyng accordyng to hys professyng;²
But, alas! his lyfe is to thy word abusyon,
Except thy great mercy, to his utter confusion.

O, where is now ³ the godly conversation,
Which shuld be amonge the professours † of thy worde!
O, where may a man find now one faythful congre-
gation,⁴

That is not enfecte with dissention or discorde?
Or, amongst whome are al vices utterly abhorred!⁵
O, where is the brotherly love betwene man and man!
We may lamente the tyme our vyce began.

O, where is the peace and mekenes, longe sufferinge
and temperaunce,
Which are the fruites of Gods holy spirit?
With whom is the fleshe brought under obedience,
Or, who readeth the scripture with intēt to folow it?
Who useth not now covetousnes and disceite?
Who geveth unto the poore, that which is due?
I thinke, in this world, few that live now.

O, where is the godli example, that parentes shuld
geve
Unto their yonge familie, by godly and vertuous living?
Alas! how wickedly⁶ do they them selves live,

¹ *and testament* omitted G. ² *profession* G.
³ *now* omitted G. ⁴ *congregation* omitted G.
⁵ *abbord utterly* G. ⁶ *wicked* G.

† Both the copies read *professour*.

Without any fear of God, or his righteous threatning!
 They have no respect unto the dreadful rekenyng,
 Which shal be required of us, when the Lord shall come,
 As a rightful judge at the day of dome.

O, what a joyful syght was it for to se,
 When *Youth* began Gods worde to embrace?
 Then he promised godly *Knowledge* and me,
 That from our instructions¹ he wold never turn his face;
 But now he walketh, alas! in the ungodlies chafe;
 Heaping sinne upon sinne, vice upon vice:

Here entreteth Juventus.

He that liveth most ungodly is counted most wyse.

Juventus.

Who is here playing at the dice?
 I heard one speake of synnes[†] and sice;²
 His wordes did me entice
 Hither to come.

Good Councill.

A, *Youth*, *Youth*, whether doest thou runne?
 Greatly I do bewayle thy miserable estate;
 The terrible plagues, which in Gods law are written,
 Hang over thy head both early and late;
 O fleshly capernite, stubburne and obstinate,
 Thou haddes lever forsake *Christ*, thy saviour and kyng,
 Then thy fleshly swinish lustes, and *Abominable Livinge*,

Juventus.

What, old hoorson, art thou a chiding?
 I wil play a spyrt, why should I not?
 I set not³ a mite by thy checkyng:

¹ instruction G.

² vice G.

³ not omitted G.

[†] Juventus, coming in and bearing imperfectly the words sinne and vice, very naturally mistakes them for terms used at dice: we may presume therefore, that the genuine reading should be cinque and sice.

106 LUSTY JUVENTUS.

What hast thou to do, and if I losse my cote ?
I wyll trill the bones while I have one grote ;
And, when there is no more inke in the pen,
I wyll make a shift, ¹ as wel as other men.

Good Councell.

Then I perceive, you have forgotten cleane
The promise, that you made unto *Knowledge* and me :
You sayd suche fleshly fruites shuld not be sene ;
But to Gods word your lyfe should agre.
Ful true be the wordes of the prophet *Osey*,
No veritie nor knowledge of God is now in the land,
But abhominable vices hath gotten the upper hand.

Juventus.

Your mind therin I do wel understand :
You go about my living to despyse,
But you wil not se the beames in your own eies.

Good Councell.

The devil hath you disceived, which is the auctor of
lies,
And trapt ² you in hys snare of wicked *Hypocrisie* ;
Therefore al that ever you do devise
Is to maintayne your fleshly libertie.

Juventus.

I mervalle, why you do this reprove me ;
Wherin, do I my life abuse ?

Good Councel.

Your whole conversacion I may well accuse,
As, in my conscience, just occasion I fynde ;
Therefore be not offended, although I expresse my mind.

Juventus.

By the masse, if thou tel not truth, I wil not be behind,
To touch you, as wel agayne.

Good Councell.

For this thing most chiefly I do complayne : ³
Have you not professed the knowlege of *Christes* gospel ?
And yet, I thinke, no more ungodlines doth raigne

¹ *spyse* G.

² *trape* G.

³ *complaye* G.

In any wycked heathen, *Turke*, or infidell;
 Who can devise that sinne or evil,
 That you practise not from day to daye?
 Yea, and count it nothyng but a jest or a play.

Alas! what wantonnes remaineth in your fleshe!
 How desirous are you to accomplish your owne will!
 What pleasure and delight have you in wickednes!
 How diligent are you your lustes to fulfil!
S. Paul saith, that you ought your fleshly lustes to kil;
 But unto his teaching your life ye wyl not frame;
 Therefore in vayne you beare a christians name.

Rede the v. to the *Galatians*, and there you shal se,
 That the flesh rebelleth agaynst the spyrit,
 And, that your own flesh is your ¹ most utter ² enemy,
 If in your soules helth you do delight:
 The time were to long now to recite,
 What whordom, uncleanes, and filthy communicacion,
 Is dispersed with youth in every congregacion.

To speke of pride, envye, and abhominable othes,
 They are the common practises of youth,
 To avaunce your flesh, you cut and jagge your clothes,
 And yet ye are a great gospeller in the mouth:
 What shalt I say for this blaspheming ³ the truth?
 I wyl shew you what *S. Paul* doth declare,
 In his epistle to the *Hebrues*, and the x chapter.

For him, sayth he, which doth willingly sin or consent,
 After he hath receyved the knowledge of the veritie,
 Remaineth no more sacrifice, but a fearful looking for
 judgement,

And a terrible ⁴ fier, which shal consume the adversary;
 And *Christ* saith, that this blasphemy
 Shal never be pardoned nor forgiven,
 In this world, nor in the world to come.

¹ our G.

² veter G.

³ blaspheming G.

⁴ terrible G.

Juventus. He lyeth down.

Alas, alas! what have I wrought and done!
Here in this place I wil fal doune desperate;
To aske for mercy now, I know, it is to late.

Alas, alas! that ever I was begat!
I wold to God, I had never bene borne!
Al faithful men, that behold this wretched state,
May very justly laugh me to scorne;
They may say, my time I have evyl spent and worne,
Thus in my first age to worke my owne destruction:
In the eternal paynes is my part and portion.

Good Councill.

Why, *Youth*, art thou fallen into desperation?
What, man, plucke up thine heart, and rise,
Although thou se nothyng now, but thy condemnation,
Yet it may please God agayne to open thy eyes:
Ah, wretched creature, what doest thou surmise?
Thinkest not, that Gods mercy doth excede thy synne?
Remembre his *Merciful Promises*, and comfort thi self in him.

Juventus.

O syr, this state is so miserable, the which I lye in,
That my comfort and hope from me is separated:
I would to God, I had never bene!
Wo worth the time, that ever I was created!

Good Councill.

A fayre vessel, unfaithful and feinte hearted,
Doeft thou thinke, that God is so mercyles,
That, when the sinner doth repente, and is converted,
That he will not fultyl his merciful promises?

Juventus.

Alas, syr! I am in suche heavines,
That his promises I cannot remembre.

Good Councill.

In thy wickednes continue no lenger;

i bis L.

But

But trust in the Lord without any feare,
And his *Merciful Promises* shall shortly appeare.

Juventus.

I would beleve, if I might them heare,
Wyth al my heart, power, and mynde.

Good Councell.

The living God hath him hether affyned :
Lo, where he commeth even here by,
Therefore marke his sayinges diligently.

Here entretb Gods Mercyfull Promises.

The Lorde by hys prophet *Ezechiel*, sayeth in this wise
playnly,

As in the xxxiiii chapter it doth appere :
Be converted, o ye children, and turne unto me,
And I shal remeedy the cause of your departure ;
And also he sayeth in the xviii chapter,
I do not delight in a sinners death,
But that he should convert and live : thus the Lord sayth.

Juventus.

Then must I geve neither creadite nor fayth
Unto saint *Pauls* sayinge, which thys man did aleg.

Gods Merciful Promises.

Yes, you must credite them, accordyng unto know-
ledge ;

For saint *Paul* speketh of those which resiste the truth by
vyolence,

And so end theyr lives without repentaunce.

Thus ¹ saint *Augustine* ² doth them define,

If unto the Lordes word you do your cares encline,
And observe these thinges which he hath commaunded,
This sinfull state, in the which you have lien,
Shal be forgotten and never more remembred :
And *Christ* him selfe in the gospel hath promised,

¹ *This L.*

² *Ausine G.*

That he, which in him unfaynedly doth beleve,
Although he were dead, yet shal he live.

Juventus. He riseth.

These comfortable sayings doth me greatly move,
To arise from this wretched place.

Gods Merciful Promises.

For me his mercy sake thou shalt optayne his grace,
And not for thine owne desertes, this must thou knowe;
For my sake alone, he shal receyve solace;
For my sake alone, he wil the mercy shew:
Therefore to him, as it is most due,
Geve most hartly thanks, with hart unfayned,
Whose name for ever more be prayfed.

Good Councel.

The prodigal sonne, as in *Luke* we rede,
Which in vicious living his goodes ¹ doth wast,
As sone, as his living he had remembred,
To confesse his wretchednes he was not agast;
Wherfore his father lovingly him embrast,
And was ² right joyfull, the text sayth playne,
Because his sone was returned ³ agayne.

Juventus.

O synfull flesh, thy pleasures are but vayne:
Now I find it true, as the scripture doth saye,
Brode ⁴ and pleasaunt is the path which ledeth unto
payne,

But unto eternal life ful narowe is the waye. †
He that is not led by God's spyrite, surely goeth astraye;
And al, that ever he doth, shal be clene abhorde,
Although he bragge and boast never so much of God's
word.

O subtil *Sathan*, ful deceitful is thy snare;
Who is able thy falshe to disclose?

¹ good G.

² as G.

³ returnen, G.

⁴ Borde L.

† Mr. Garrick's copy is imperfect and ends at this mark.

What is the man, that thou doest favour or spare,
And doest not tempt him eternal joyes to lose?
Not one in the world, surely I suppose.
Therefore happy is the man, which doth truely wayte,
Alwayes to refuse thy deceytful and crafty bayte.

When I had thought to lyve most christyanly,
And folowed the steppes of *Knowled* and *Good Councell*,
Ere I was ware, thou haddest deceyved me,
And brought me into the path, which leadeth unto hell:
And of an earnest professor of *Christes* gospell,
Thou madest me an ypocrite, blynd, and pervert,
And from vertue unto vice thou hadst cleane turned my
hert.

First, by *Hypocrisie* thou diddest me move,
The mortification of the flesh cleane to forsake,
And wanton desyres to embrace and love;
Alas! to thynke on it my heart doth yet quake:
Under the title of *Friendshyp* to me he spake,
And so to wicked *Fellowshyp* dyd me brynge,
Which brought me cleane to *Abominable Livyng*.

Thus, I say, *Sathan* did me disceive,
And wrapped me in sinne many a fold;
The steppes of *Good Councel* I dyd forsake and leave,
And forgot the words which before to me he told:
The fruites of a true christian in me waxed cold;
I folowed myne owne lustes, the fleshe I did not tame,
And had them in dirision which would not do the same.

Yet it hath pleased God of his endles mercy,
To geve me respite my lyfe to amende;
From the bottome of my herte I repent my iniquitie,
I wyll walke in hys lawes unto my lives ende:
From his holy ordinaunce I will never dicend,
But my whole delight shal be to live therin,
Utterly abhorring al filthines and synne.

i mot L.

* *All Christen people which be here present,
 Maye learne by me, hipocrisie to know,
 Wythe which the devil, as with a poyson most pestilent,
 Dayly seketh al men to overthrow :*
 Credite not al thynges unto the outward shew,
 But trie them with Gods word, that squire and rule most
 just,

Which never disceiveth them, that in him put their trust.

Let not flatterying frendshyp, nor yet wicked company,
 Perswade you in no wyse, Gods word to abuse ;
 But se that ye stand stedfastly unto the viritie,
 And according to the rule therof your doings frame and
 use,

Neither kindred nor felowship shal you excuse,
 When you shal appere before the judgement seat,
 But your own secreet conscience shal then geve an audite.

All you that be yong, whom I do now represent,
 Set your delite both day and nyght on *Chriftes* testament :
 If pleasure you tickle, be not fickle, and sodenly flyde,
 But in Gods feare every where se that you abide :
 In your tender age seke for knowledge, and after wisdom
 rune,

And in your old age teache your familye, to do as you
 have done :

Your bodyes subdue unto vertue, delite not in vaynity ;
 Say not, I am yong, I shal live long, lest your daies
 shortened be :

Do not encline to spend yourtime in wanton toies and nyce,
 For idlenes doth encrease much wickednes and vyce :

Do not delay the tyme, and say, my ende is not nere ;
 For with short warning the Lords coming shal sodenli
 apere.

God give us grace, his word to embrace, and to live
 therafter,

That bi the same his holy name may be praised ever.

* *The following lines being torn are filled up by conjecture with the words
 printed in Italicks.*

Good Councel.

Now let us make our supplications together,
 For the prosperous estate of our noble and vertuous king,
 That in his godly procedynges he may stil persever,
 Which seketh the glory of God above al other thing:
 O Lord, endue his hert with true understanding,
 And geve him a prosperous life long over us to raigne,
 To governe and rule his people as a worthy captayne.

Juventus.

Also, let us pray for al the nobilitie of this *realme*;
 And, namely, for those whom his grace hath *authorised*
 To mayntayne the publike wealth over us and them,
 That they may se his gracious actes published;
 And that they, being truly admonished,
 By the complaint of them which are wrongfulli opprest
 May seke reformation, and se it redrest.

Good Councel.

Then shall this land enjoy great quietnes and rest:
 And geve unto God most herty thanks therfore,
 To whom be honour, prayse and glory for evermore.

I is L.

Finis. quod R. *Wever.*

Imprinted at *London* in *Paules* church yeard,
 by *Abraham Vele*, at the sygne of the *Lambe*.



A RIGHT
PITHY, PLEASANT, AND MERRY
C O M E D Y:
ENTITLED,
GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.



2. The second section addresses the challenges associated with data management and security. It highlights the need for organizations to protect sensitive information from unauthorized access and potential breaches. The text recommends the use of secure storage solutions and the implementation of strict access controls to ensure that data remains confidential and intact.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the importance of regular audits and reviews. It states that periodic assessments are necessary to identify areas of improvement and ensure that all processes are functioning as intended. The text encourages organizations to conduct both internal and external audits to maintain high standards of performance and compliance.

4. The final section discusses the role of technology in modern business operations. It notes that while technology offers numerous benefits, it also introduces new risks and complexities. The text advises organizations to stay updated on the latest technological advancements and to invest in training to ensure that their workforce is equipped to handle the challenges of a digital environment.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE,

— is the first regular comedy in our language, and was written in the same reign as the preceding morality; the first edition, according to Mr. Oldys' tables (MS.) being printed in the year 1551. The editor has not been so fortunate as to meet with any copy previous to the year 1661, from which the present edition is given. It appears by this play, that the practice of entertaining the audience with musick between the acts prevailed in the very infancy of the stage. See the end of Act 2.

*Into the town will I, my frendes to vyzit there,
And hether straight again to see th' end of this gere.
In the mean time, felowes, pype up your fiddles, I say
take them,
And let your friends here such mirth as ye can make
them.*



T H E P R O L O G U E.

*AS Gammer Gurton, with many a wide sliche,
 Sat pefing and patching of Hodge her man's briche;
 By chance or misfortune, as she her gear loft,
 In Hodge lether briches her needle she loft.
 When Diccon the bedlam had hard by report,
 That good Gammer Gurton was rob'd in this sort,
 He quietlie pexfwaged with her in that stound,
 Dame Chat her dear gossip this needle had found.
 Yet knew she no more of this matter: (alas)
 Then knoweth Tom our clarke what the priest saith at masse.
 Hereof there ensued so fearful a fray,
 Mas Docter was sent for these gossips to stay;
 Because he was curate, and esteemed full wise,
 Who found that he sought not, by Diccon's device.
 When all things were tumbled and clean out of fassion.
 Whether it were by fortune, or some other constellation,
 Sodenlie the needle Hodge found by the pricking,
 And drew out his buttocke, where he found it sticking.
 Their hearts then at rest with perfect security,
 With a pot of good nale they stroak up their plaudity.*

The

The NAMES and SPEAKERS of this
COMEDY.

DICCON, *the Bedlam.*

HODGE, *Gammer GURTON's Servant.*

TYB, *Gammer GURTON's Maid.*

GAMMER GURTON.

COCK, *Gammer GURTON's Boy.*

Dame CHAT.

Doctor RAT, *the Curate.*

Mayster BAILY.

DOLL, *Dame CHAT's Mayd.*

SCAPETHRYFT, *Mayster BAILEY's Servant.*

MUTES.

GOD *save the* KING.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

THE FIRST ACT. THE FIRST SCEANE.

Diccon.

MANY a mile have I walked, divers and fundry
waies,
And many a good man's house have bin at in my
days.

Many a gossip's cup in my time have I tasted,
And many a broche spite have I both turned and basted.
Many a peece of bacon have I had out of their balkes,
In running over the country, with and long wery walkes.
Yet came my foot never within those door cheekes,
To seek flesh or fish, garlike, onions, or leekes,
That ever I saw a sort in such a plight,
As here within this house appeareth to my sight,
There is a howling and scowling, all cast in a dumpe,
With whewling and pewling, as though they had lost a
trump,

Sighing and sobbing, they weep and they wail.
I marvel in my mind, what the devyl they ail.
The old trot fits groning, with alas, and alas,
And *Tib* wrings her hands, and takes on in worse case.
With poor *Cocke* their boy, they be driven in such fits,
I fear me the folkes be not well in their wits.

172 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Ask them what they ail, or who brought them in this stay?
 They answer not at all, but alacke and welaway.
 When I saw it booted not, out at doors I hied me,
 And caught a slip of bacon, when I saw that none spied
 me,
 Which I intended not far hence, unless my promise fail,
 Shall serve for a shoinghorn to draw on two pots of ale.

THE FIRST ACT. THE SECOND SCENE.

Hodge. Diccon.

Hodge.

Se, so cham arayed with dabling in the dirt!
 She that set me to ditching, ich wold she had the squirt.
 Was never poor soul that such a life had!
 Gog's bones, this vilthy glay hafe drest me too bad.
 God's soul, see how this stuffe tears?
 Ich were better to be a bareward, and set to keep bares.
 By the masse, here is a gashe, a shamefull hole insdead,
 And one slich tear furdur, a man may thrust in his head.

Diccon.

By my father's soul, *Hodge*, if I shuld now be sworn,
 I cannot chuse but say thy breech is foul betorn:
 But the next remedy in such a case and hap,
 Is to plaunche on a piece as brod as thy cap.

Hodge.

Gog's soul, man, 'tis not yet two daies fully ended,
 Since my dame *Gurton* (cham sure) these breeches amended.
 But cham made such a drudge to trudge at every need,
 Chwold rend it, though it were stitched with sturdy
 packthreed.

Diccon.

Hodge, let thy breeches go, and speak and tell me soon,
 What devil aileth gammer *Gurton*, and *Tib* her maid to
 frown.

Hodge.

Hodge.

Tush, man, th'art deceived, 'tis their daily looke:
They cover so over the coles, their eies be blear'd with
smooke.

Diccon.

Nay, by the masse, I perfectly perceived as I came
hether,
That either *Tib* and her dame hath been by the care
together,
Or els as great a matter, as thou shalt shortly se.

Hodge.

Now ich beseech our Lord they never better agree.

Diccon.

By Gog's foul, there they sit as still as stones in the
street,
As though they had been taken with some fairies, or els
with some ill spreet.

Hodge.

Gog's hart, I durst have laid my cap to a crown,
Ch' would learn of some prancome as soon as ich cham to
town.

Diccon.

Why, *Hodge*, art thou inspired? or didst thou thereof
here?

Hodge.

Nay, but ich saw such a wonder, as ich saw not this
seven year.

Tom Tankard's cow, (be gog's bones,) she set me up her
tail,

And flinging about his halfe aker, fliking with her tail,
As though there had been in her arse a swarm of bees;
And chad not cryed tthrowh hoor, shea'd lept out of his
lees.

Diccon.

Why, *Hodge*, lies the conning in *Tom Tankard's* cowe's
tail?

Hodge.

Well, ich chawe hard some say such tokens do not fail.
But

174 **GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.**

But ca'st thou not tell, in faith, *Diccon*, why she frowns,
or whereat?

Hath no man stoln her ducks, or hens, or gelded *Gib* her
cat?

Diccon.

What devil can I tell, man, I cold not have one word,
They gave no more heed to my talke then thou woldst to
a lord.

Hodge.

Ich cannot still but muse, what mervejlous thing it is:
Chill in and know my self what matters are amise.

Diccon.

Then fare well, *Hodge*, a while, since thou dost inward
hast,
For I will into the good wife *Chat's*, to feel how the ale
doth tast.

THE FIRST ACTE. THE THIRD SCEANE.

Hodge. Tib.

Hodge.

Cham agast, by the masse, ich wot not what to do;
Chad need bleffe me well before ich go them to:
Perchaunce, some fellon spirit may haunt our house
indeed,

And then chwere but a noddy to venter cha no need.

Tib.

Cham worfe then mad, by the masse, to be at this stay.
Cham chid, cham blamd, and beaten all thours on the
day.

Lamed and hunger storved, pricked up all in jagges,
Having no patch to hide my backe, save a few rotten
ragges.

Hodge.

I say, *Tib*, if thou be *Tib*, as I trow sure thou be,
What devil make a de is this between our dame and thee?

Tib.

Tib.

Gog's bread, *Hodge*, thou had a good turn thou wart
not here this while ;
It had ben better for some of us to have ben hencee a mile :
My gammer is so out of course, and frantike all at once,
That *Cocke*, our boy, and I poor wench, have felt it on
our bones.

Hodge.

What is the matter, say on, *Tib*, whereat she taketh so
on ?

Tib.

She is undone, she faith, (alas) her joy and life is gone :
If she here not of some comfort, she is faith but dead,
Shall never come within her lips, on inch of meat ne
bread.

Hodge.

Bir ladie, cham not very glad to see her in this dumpe ;
Chold a noble, her stole hath fallen, and she hath broke
her rumpe.

Tib.

Nay, and that were the worst, we wold not greatly care,
For bursting of her huckle bone, or breaking of her chair.
But greater, greater is her grief, as, *Hodge*, we shall all
feel.

Hodge.

Gog's wounds, *Tib*, my gammer has never lost her
neele ?

Tib.

Her neele.

Hodge.

Her neele ?

Tib.

Her neele, by him that made me ; it is true, *Hodge*,
I tell thee.

Hodge.

God's sacrament ! I would she had lest tharte out of
her belly,

The

176 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

The devil, or els his dame, they ought her fure a shame.
How a murion came this chaunce, (say, *Tib*,) unto our
dame?

Tib.

My gammer sat her down on the pes, and bad me reach
thy breches,
And by and by, a vengeance on it, or she had take two
stitches
To clout upon thine ars, by chaunce asidde she leats,
And *Gib* our cat, in the milk-pan, she spied over head
and ears.
A, hoör, out, theefe she cried aloud, and swapt the breeches
down,
Up went her staffe, and out leapt *Gib* at doors into the
town:
And since that time was never wight cold set their eies
upon it.
God's malison, chawe *Cocke* and I bid twentie times light
on it.

Hodge.

And is not then my breches sewid up, to morrow that
I shuld wear?

Tib.

No, in faith, *Hodge*, thy breches lie, for all this never
the near.

Hodge.

Now a vengeance light on al the sort, that better shold
have kept it;
The cat, the house, and *Tib* our maid, that better shold
have swept it.
Se, where she cometh crawling! Come on, in twenty
devils way;
Ye have made a fair daie's worke, have you not? pray
you, say.

THE

THE FIRST ACTE. THE FOURTH SCENE.

Gammer. Hodge. Tib. Cocke.

Gammer.

Alas, alas, I may well curse and ban
This day, that ever I saw it, with *Grb* and the milke pan.
For these, and ill lucke together, as knoweth *Cocke* my
boie,

Have stacke away my dear neele, and rob'd me of my joie.
My fair long straight neele, that was mine only treasure,
The first day of my sorrow is, and last of my pleasure.

Hodge.

Might ha kept it when ye had it; but fools will be
fools still :

Lose that is vast in your hands? ye need not, but ye will.

Gammer.

Go hie thee, *Tib*, and run, thou hoor, to th' end here
of the town.

Didst carry out dust in thy lap? seek where thou porest it
down;

And as thou sawest me roking in the ashes where I
morned,

So see in all the heap of dust thou leave no straw unturned.

Tib.

That chal, *Gammer*, swithe and tite, and sone be here
again.

Gammer.

Tib, stoop and loke down to the ground to it, and take
some pain.

Hodge.

Here is a prety matter, to see this gere how it goes :
By gog's soul, I think you wold los your arse, and it
were loose.

178 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Your neele lost ? it is pitie you shold lacke care and endles
forrow.

Gog's deth, how shall my breches be sewid ? shall I go
thus to morow ?

Gammer.

Ah, *Hodge*, *Hodge*, if that ich cold find my neele, by
the reed,

Ch'ould sow thy breches ich promise the, with full good
double threed,

And set a patch on either knee, shall last this months twain,
Now God, and saint *Sitbe*, I pray, to send it back again.

Hodge.

Whereto served your hands and eies, but your neele to
keep ?

What devil had you els to do ? ye keep, ich wot, no sheep.
Cham fain abroad to dig and delve, in water, mire and
clay,

Soffing and poffing in the durt, still from daie to daie.

A hundred things that be abroad, cham set to see them
weel ;

And four of you sit idle at home, and cannot keep a neele.

Gammer.

My neele, alas, ich lost, *Hodge*, what time ich me up
hasted,

To save milk set up for the, which *Gib* our cat hath wasted.

Hodge.

The devil he burst both *Gib* and *Tib*, with all the rest ;
Cham alwaies sure of the worst end, whoever have the
best.

Where ha you ben fidging abroad, since you your neele
lost ?

Gammer.

Within the house, and at the door, sitting by this same
poit ;

Where I was looking a long hour, before these folke came
here ;

But

But, welawaie! all was in vain, my neele is never the near.

Hodge.

Set me a candle, let me seek, and grope where ever it be.

Gog's heart, ye be foolish (ich think) you know it not when you it see.

Gammer.

Come hether, *Cocke*; what *Cocke*, I say.

Cocke.

How, *Gammer*?

Gammer.

Go, hie thee soon, and grope behind the old brosse pan,
Which thing when thou hast done,
There shalt thou find an olde shoe, wherein, if thou looke well,

Thou shalt find lieng an inche of white tallow candell;
Light it, and bring it rite away.

Cocke.

That shalbe done anone.

Gammer.

Nay, tary, *Hodge*, till thou hast light, and then weel seek ich one.

Hodge.

Cum away, ye horson boy, are ye asleep? ye must have a crier.

Cocke.

Ich cannot get the candle light, here is almost no fire.

Hodge.

Chil hold the peny, chil make thee come if ich may catch thine ears.

Art deffe, thou horson boy? *Cock*, I say, why canst not heare's?

Gammer.

Beat him not, *Hodge*, but helpe the boy, and come you two together.

THE FIRST ACTE. THE FIFTH SCEANE.

Gammer. Tib. Cocke. Hodge.

Gammer.

How now, *Tib!* quick, lets here, what news thou hast brought hether!

Tib.

Chave toft and tumbled yonder heap over and over again,
And winowed it through my fingers, as men wold winow grain;
Not so much as a hen's turd; but in pieces I tare it,
Or what so ever clod or clay I found, I did not spare it.
Looking within and eke without, to find your neele (alas)
But all in vain, and without help, your neele is where it was.

Gammer.

Alas, my neele we shall never meet! adue, adue for aye.

Tib.

Not so, *Gammer*, we might it finde, if we knew where it lay.

Cocke.

Gog's crosse, *Gammer*, if ye will laugh, look in but at the door,
And see how *Hodge* lieth tomblinge and tossing amids the floure,
Raking there, some fyre to find among the ashes dead,
Where there is not one sparke so big as a pin's head:
At last in a dark corner two sparkes he thought he sees,
Which where indede nought else, but *Gib* our cat's two eyes.
Puffe, quod *Hodge*, thinking thereby to have fyre without doubt;

With

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 181

With that *Gib* shut her two eyes, and so the fyre was out;
And by and by them opened, even as they were before,
With that the sparkes appered even as they had done of
yore;

And even as *Hodge* blew the fire as he did thinck,
Gib, as she felt the blast, straight way began to wincke;
Till *Hodge* fell of swering, as came best to his turn,
The fier was sure bewicht, and therefore would not burn:
At last *Gib* up the stayers, among the old postes and pins,
And *Hodge* he hied him after, til broke were both his
shins:

Curfing and swearing oths, were never of his making,
That *Gib* would fire the house, if that she were not taken.

Gammer.

See here is all the thought that the foolish urchin
taketh!

And *Tib* methink at his elbow, almost as mery maketh.
This is all the wit ye have when others make their
mone.

Come down, *Hodge*, where art thou? and let the cat
alone.

Hodge.

Gogs heart, help and come up, *Gib* in her taile hath
fire,

And is like to burn all if she get a little hie:

Cum down (quoth you?) nay, then you might count me
a patch,

The house cometh down on your heads if it take ons the
thatch.

Gammer.

It is the cat's eyes, fool, that shineth in the dark.

Hodge.

Hath the cat, do you think, in every eye a spark?

Gammer.

No, but they shine as like fire as ever man see.

Hodge.

By the mass, and she burn all, yoush bear the blame
for me.

Gammer.

Cum down and help to seek here our neel that it were found;

Down, *Tib*, on thy knees, I say; down *Cock* to the ground.

To God I make a vow, and so to good saint *Anne*,
A candel shall they have a peece, get it where I can,
If I may my neel finde in one place or in other.

Hodge.

Now a vengeance on *Gib* light, on *Gib* and *Gib's* mother,

And all the generation of cats both far and nere!

Look on the ground, horson, thinks thou the neel is here?

Cocke.

By my trowth, *Gammer*, me thought your nedle here I saw,

But when my fingers toucht it, I felt it was a straw.

Tib.

See, *Hodge*, what 'tis; may it not be within it?

Hodge.

Break it, fool, with thy hand, and see and thou canst finde it.

Tib.

Nay, break it you, *Hodge*, according to your word.

Hodge.

Gog's fides, fie! it stincks: it is a cat's tound:
It were well done to make thee eat it, by the mas.

Gammer.

This matter amendeth not, my neel is still where it was,

Our candle is at an ende, let us all in quight,
And come another time, when we have more light.

THE SECOND ACTE.

First a SONG.

Back and side go bare, go bare,
booth foot and hande go colde :
But belly, God send thee Good ale ynoughe,
whether it be new or old.

I Can not eat, but little meat,
my stomack is not good ;
But sure I think, that I can drink
with him that weares a hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
I am nothing a colde ;
I stufte my skin so full within,
of joly good ale and old.
Back and side go bare, go bare,
booth foot and hand go cold :
But belly, God send the good ale inoughe,
whether it be new or old.

I love no rost, but a nut-brown toste,
and a crab laid in the fire,
A little bread shall do me stead,
much bread I not desire.
No froste nor snow, no winde, I trow,
can hurte me if I wolde,
I am so wrapt, and throwly lapt
of joly good ale and old.
Back and side go bare, &c.

And

And *Tib* my wife, that as her life
 loveth well good ale to seek,
 Full ofte drinkes shee, till ye may see
 the teares run down her cheeke;
 Then dooth she trowle to me the bowle,
 even as a mault worm shold;
 And saith, sweet heart, I took my part
 of this joly good ale and old.
 Back and side go bare, &c.

Now let them drink, till they nod and wink,
 even as good fellows should do,
 They shall not misse to have the blisse
 good ale doth bring men to:
 And all poor souls that have scowred boules,
 or have them lustely trolde,
 God save the lives of them and their wives
 whether they be yong or old.
 Back, and side go bare, &c.

THE FIRST SCEANE.

Diccon, and Hodge.

Diccon.

Well done, by Gog's malt, well song and well said:
 Come on, mother *Chat*, as thou art true maid.
 One fresh pot of ale let's see, to make an end
 Against this cold wether, my naked arms to defend:
 This gere it warms the soul; now, wind, blow on thy
 worst,
 And let us drink and swill till that our bellies burst.
 Now were he a wise man, by cunning cold define
 Which way my journey lyeth, or where *Diccon* will dine:
 But one good turn I have, be it by night or day,
 South, east, north or west, I am never out of my way.

Hodge.

Hodge.

Chym goodly rewarded, cham I not, do you thincke?
 Chad a goodly dianer for all my sweat and fwincke;
 Neither butter, cheefe, milk, onyons, flesh nor fish,
 Save this poor peece of barly bread, tis a pleasant costly
 dish.

Diccon.

Hail, fellow *Hodge*, and well to fare with thy meat, if
 thou have any:
 But by thy words, as I them smeled, thy daintrels be not
 many.

Hodge.

Daintrels, *Diccon*! Gogs soul, man, save this peece of
 dry horsbred,
 Cha byt no bit this live-long day, no crome come in my
 hed:
 My guts they yawle, crawle, and all my belly rumbleth,
 The puddings cannot lie still, ech one over other
 tumbleth,
 By gog's hart, cham so vexte, and in my belly pend,
 Chould one peece were at the spittlehouse, another at
 the castel's end.

Diccon.

Why, *Hodge*, was there none at home thy dinner for to
 set?

Hodge.

Gogs bread, *Diccon*, ich came to late, was nothing ther
 to get:
Gib (a foul feind might on her light) lickt the milk pan
 so clein;
 See, *Diccon*, 'twas not so well washt this seven yere, as ich
 went.
 A pestilence light on al ill-luck, chad thought yet for all
 this
 Of a morfel of bacon behind the dore, at worst should not
 miss;

But

But when ich fought a flip to cut, as ich was wont to do,
Gogs foul, *Diccon*, Gib our cat had eat the bacon to !

[*Which bacon Diccon stole, as is declared before.*
Diccon.

Ill luck, quod he ? may swere it, *Hodg*, this day the
truth to tell,
Thou rose not on thy right side, or else blest thee not
well.
Thy milk slopt up ! thy bacon filch'd ! that was to bad
luck, *Hodg*.

Hodge.

Nay, nay, there was a fowler fault, my gammer ga'me
the bodg :
Seest not how cham rent and torn, my heels, my knees,
and my breech ?
Chad thought as ich sat by the fire, help here and there
a stitch ;
But there ich was powpte indeed.

Diccon.

Why, *Hodg* ?

Hodge.

Boots not, man, to tell ;
Cham so drest amonit a sort of fooles, chad better be in
hell,
My gammer (cham ashamed to say) by God, served me
not well.

Diccon.

How so, *Hodg* ?

Hodge.

Hafe she not gone, trowest now, and lost her neele ?

Diccon.

Her eele, *Hodg* ! who ficht of late ? that was a dainty
dish.

Hodge.

Tush, tush, her neele, her neele, her neele, man ; tys
neither flesh nor fish,
A lytle thing with an hole in the ende, as bright as any
syller,

Small

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 187

Small, long, sharp at the point, and straight as any pillar.

Diccon.

I know not what a devil thou menest, thou bringst me more in doubt.

Hodge.

Knowest not what *Tom* tailor's man sits broching thro' a clout?

A neele, a neele, a neele, my gammer's neele is gone.

Diccon.

Her neele! *Hodg*, now I smell thee, that was a chaunce alone:

By the mass, thou hadst a shameful loss, and it were but for thy breches.

Hodge.

Gogs soul, man, should give a crown, chad it but three stitches.

Diccon.

How say'st thou, *Hodg*? what shuld he have, again thy needle got?

Hodge.

Be'm vather's soul, and chad it, should give him a new grot.

Diccon.

Canst thou keep counsaile in this case?

Hodge.

Els chworld my tong were out.

Diccon.

Do thou but then by my advise, and I wil fetch it without doubt.

Hodge.

Chyll run, chyll ride, chyll dygge, chyll delve,
 chyll toyle, chyll trudge, shalt see;
 Chyll hold, chyll draw, chyll pull, chyll pynch,
 chyll kneel on my bare knee;
 Chyll scrape, chyll scratch, chyll fyfte, chyll seek,
 chyll bow, chyll bend, chyll sweat,
 Chyll stoop, chyll stur, chyll cap, chyll knele,
 chyll crep on hands and feet;

Chyll

Chyll be thy bondman, *Diccon*, ich swear by sun and moon,

And channot sumwhat to stop this gap, cham uesterly undone. [*Pointing behind to his torn breeches.*]

Diccon.

Why, is ther any speeial cause thou takest hereat such forow ?

Hodge.

Kirfsian Clack, Tom Simson's maid, by the mass come hether to morrow ;

Cham not able to say, between us what may hap,
She smiled on me the last sunday when ich put off my cap.

Diccon.

Well, *Hodg*, this is a matter of weight, and must be kept close,

It might els turn to both our costes, as the world now gose.

Shalt fware to be no blab, *Hodg*.

Hodge.

Chill, *Diccon*.

Diccon.

Then go to,
Lay thine hand here, say after me, as thou shalt here me do.

Haft no book ?

Hodge.

Cha no book, I.

Diccon.

Then needs must force us both,
Upon my breech to lay thine hand, and there to take thine oth.

Hodge.

I *Hodge* breecheless,
Swear to *Diccon* recheless
By the cross that I shall kiss,
To keepe his counsaile close,

And

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 189

And always me to dispose
To work that his pleasure is,

[*Here he kisseth Diccon's breech.*

Diccon.

Now, *Hodg*, see thou take heed,
And do as I thee bid;
For so I judge it meet,
This needle again to win,
There is no shift therein,
But conjure up a spreet.

Hodge.

What, the great devil, *Diccon*, I say?

Diccon.

Yea, in good faith, that is the way,
Fet with some pretty charm.

Hodge.

Soft, *Diccon*, be not to hasty yet,
By the mass, for ich begin to sweate,
Cham afraid of some harm.

Diccon.

Come hether then, and stir the nat
One inche out of this cyrcle plat,
But stand as I thee teach.

Hodge.

And shall ich be here safe from their clawes?

Diccon.

The mayster devil with his longe pawes
Here to thee cannot reache.
Now will I settle me to this geare.

Hodge.

I say, *Diccon*, hear me, hear:
Go softly to this matter.

Diccon.

What devil, man, art afraid of nought?

Hodge.

Canst not tarry a little thought,
Till ich make a curtesie of water?

Diccon.

Diccon.

Stand still to it, why shuldest thou fear him?

Hodge.

Gog's fides, *Diccon*, me think ich hear him,
And tarry chall more all.

Diccon.

The matter is no worfe then I told it.

Hodge.

By the maffe, cham able no longer to hold it,
So bad, ich must beraye the hall.

Diccon.

Stand to it, *Hodge*, sture not, you horfon.
What devil, be thine ars stringes brusten?
Thy self a while but stay,
The devil, I smell him, will be here anone.

Hodge.

Hold him fast, *Diccon*, cham gone, cham gone,
Chil not be at that fraye.

THE SECOND ACT. THE SECOND SCEANE.

Diccon. Chat.

Diccon.

Fy, shitten knave, and out upon thee!
Above all other loutes, fie on thee!
Is not here a clenly prancke?
But thy matter was no better,
Nor thy presence here no fweter,
To flye I can thee thank.
Here is a matter worthy glosing
Of *Gammer Gurton's* nedle losing,
And a foul peece of wark:
A man, I thincke, might make a play,
And nede no word to this they say,
Being but halfe a clark.

Soft,

S
T
V
I
I
I

Soft, let me alone, I will take the charge,
This matter further to enlarge
Within a time short;
If ye will mark my toyes, and note,
I will give ye leave to cut my throte
If I make not good sport.

Dame, *Chat*, I say; where be ye, within?

Chat.

Who have we there maketh such a din?

Diccon.

Here is a good fellow, maketh no great daunger.

Chat.

What, *Diccon*? come nere, ye be no straunger:
We be fast set at trump, man, hard by the fire;
Thou shalt set on the king, if thou come a little nyer.

Diccon.

Nay, nay, there is no tarying: I must be gone again;
But first for you in counceI I have a word or twain.

Chat.

Come hether, *Dol*; *Dol*, sit down and play this game,
And as thou sawest me do, see thou do even the same:
There is five trumps besides the queen, the hindmost thou
shalt finde her,

Take hede of *Sim Glover's* wife, she hath an eye behind
her.

Now, *Diccon*, say your will.

Diccon.

Nay, soft a little yet,
I would not tell my sifter, the matter is so great,
There I will have you swear by our dere lady of

Bullaine, *

Saint *Dunstone* and faint *Donnyke*, with the three kings of
Kullain,

That ye shall keep it secret.

* Probably, lady Ann Bullen.

Chat;

194 **GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.**

Chat.

Gog's bread, that will I doo,
As secret as mine own thought, by God and the devil too.

Diccon.

Here is *Gammer Garton*, your neighbour, a sad and
hevy weight,
Her goodly fair red cock at home, was stole this last
night.

Chat.

Gog's foul! her cock with the yelow legs, that nightly
crowed so just?

Diccon.

That cock is stollen.

Chat.

What, was he fet out of the hen's ruste?

Diccon.

I can not tell where the devil he was kept, under key
or lock,
But *Tib* hath tikled in gammer's ear, that you should steal
the cock.

Chat.

Have I? strong hoor, by bread and salt —

Diccon.

What, soft, I say be still.
Say not one word for all this geare.

Chat.

By the mafs, that I will,
I wil have the yong hore by the head, and the old trot
by the throte.

Diccon.

Not one word, dame *Chat*, I say, not one word for my
cote.

Chat.

Shal such a begar's brawl as that, thinkest thou, make
me a thief?
The pocks light on her hores sides, a pestilence and
misheefe.

Comē

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 193

Come out, thou hungry nedy bytche ; O that my nails be
short !

Diccon.

Gog's bred, woman, hold your peace, this gere wil els
pass sport ;
I wold not for an hundred pound, this matter shuld be
known

That I am auctor of this tale, or have abrode it blowen.
Did ye not swear ye wold be ruled, before the tale I
told ?

I said ye must all secret keep, and she said sure ye wolde.

Chat.

Wold you suffer your self, *Diccon*, such a fort to revile
you
With slanderous words to blot your name, and so to defile
you ?

Diccon.

No, good wife *Chat*, I wold be loth such drabs shuld
blot my name ;
But yet ye must so order all, that *Diccon* bare no blame.

Chat.

Go to then, what is your rede, say on your mind, ye
shall me rule herein.

Diccon.

Godamercy to dame *Chat*, in faith thou must the gere
begin :
It is twenty pound to a goose turd my gammer will not
tary.

But hither ward she comes as fast as her legs can her cary,
To brawle with you about her cock, for wel I hard *Tib*
say,

The cock was rosted in your house, to brefast yesterday :
And when he had the carcas eaten, the fethers ye out
flunge,

And *Dall*, your maid, the legs she hid a foot depe in the
dung.

Chat.

O gracious God, my heart it burstes !
Vo L. I. N

Diccon.

Diccon.

Well, rule your self a space,
 And gammer *Gurton* when she cometh anon into this
 place,
 Then to the quean let's see ye tell her your mind, and
 spare not,
 So shall *Diccon* blameless bee; and then go to, I care not.

Chat.

Then hoor, beware her throte, I can abide no longer;
 In faith, in faith, old witch, it shall be seen which of us
 two be stronger;
 And, *Diccon*, but at your request, I wold not stay one hour.

Diccon.

Well, keep it in till she be here, and then out let it
 pour.
 In the mean while get you in, and make no words of
 this;
 More of this matter within this hour to here you shall not
 mis.
 Because I know you are my friend, hide it I could not,
 doubtless:
 Ye know your harm, see ye be wise about your own
 business.
 So fare ye well.

Chat.

Nay, soft, *Diccon*, and drink: what, *Doll*, I say,
 Bring here a cup of the best ale, let's see, come quickly
 away.

*Hodg. Diccon.**Diccon.*

Ye see, masters, that one end tapt of this my short
 devise,
 Now must we brochte t'other to, before the smoke arise,
 And by the time they have a while run,

Exeunt

I trust ye need not crave it,
But loke what lieth in both their harts, ye are like sure
to have it.

Hodge.

Yea, gog's soul, art alive yet? what, *Diccon*, dare ich
come?

Diccon.

A man is wel hied to trust to thee, I wil say nothing
but mam.
But and ye come any nearer, I pray you see all be sweet.

Hodge.

Tush, man, is gammer's neele found? that chould gladly
weete.

Diccon.

She may thank the it is not found, for if you had kept
thy standing,
The devil he wold have fet it out, ev'n *Hodg*, at thy
commanding.

Hodge.

Gog's hart! and cold he tel nothing where that neele
might be found?

Diccon.

Ye foolish dolt, ye were to seek, ere we had got our
ground;
Therefore his tale so doubtful was, that I cold not
perceive it.

Hodge.

Then ich se wel something was said, chope one day yet
to have it.
But, *Diccon*, *Diccon*, did not the devil cry, ho, ho, ho?

Diccon.

If thou hadst taried where thou stood'st, thou woldest
have said so.

Hodge.

Durst swere of a boke, chard him rore, streight after
ich was gone;

196 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

But tell me, *Diccon*, what said the knave, let me here it anon.

Diccon.

The horson talked to me, I know not well of what:
 One while his tonge it ran, and paltered of a cat,
 Another while he stammered still upon a rat;
 Last of all there was nothing but every word chat, chat;
 But this I well perceived before I wolde him rid,
 Betweene chat and the rat, and the cat the nedle is hid:
 Now, whether *Gib* our cat have eat it in her mawe,
 Or doctor *Rat* our curat have found it in the straw,
 Or this dame *Chat* your neighbour have stollen it God he
 knoweth,
 But by the morrow at this time, we shall learn how the
 matter goeth.

Hodge.

Canst learn to night, man? seest not what is here?
 [*Pointing behind to his torn breeches.*]

Diccon.

Tis not possible to make it sooner appere.

Hodge.

Alas, *Diccon*, then chave no shift; but least ich tary to
 long,
 Hie me to *Sim Glover's* shop, there to seek for a thonge,
 Therewith this breech to tatche and tye as ich may.

Diccon.

To morrow, *Hodg*, if we chaunce to meet, shall see
 what I will saye.

THE SECOND ACTE. THE THIRD SCEANE.

Diccon. Gammer.

Diccon.

Now this gere must forward go, for here my gammer cometh :

Be still a while and say nothing, make here a little rometh.

Gammer.

Good lord ! shall never be my luck my neele again to spie ?

Alas the while, tys past my help ; where 'tis, still it must lie.

Diccon.

Now, *Jesus*, gammer *Gurton*, what driveth you to this sadnes ?

I fear me, by my conscience, you will sure fall to madnes.

Gammer.

Who is that ? what, *Diccon* ? cham lost, man : fye, fye.

Diccon.

Mary, fye on them that be worthy ; but what shuld be your trouble ?

Gammer.

Alas, the more ich think on it, my sorrow it waxeth doble.

My goodly tossing *Sporiar's* neele, chave lost ich wot not where.

Diccon.

Your neele ! when ?

Gammer.

My neele (alas !) ich might full ill it spare,

As God himself he knoweth nere one beside chave.

Diccon.

If this be all, good gammer, I warrant you all is save.

Gammer.

Why, know you any tidings which way my neele is gone?

Diccon.

Yea, that I do, doubtles, as ye shall here anone;
A see a thing this matter toucheth, within these twenty
hours,
Even at this gate, before my face, by a neighbour of
yours;
She stooped me down, and up she toke a needle or a pin,
I durst be sworn it was even yours, by all my mother's
kin.

Gammer.

It was my neele, *Diccon*, ich wot; for here even by this
post
Ich sat, what time as ich up start, and so my neele it lost:
Who was it, leive son? speke ich pray the, and quickly
tel me that.

Diccon.

A futtle quean as any in the town,
your neighbour here, dame *Chat*.

Gammer.

Dame Chat! *Diccon*, let me be gone, chil thither in
post haste.

Diccon.

Take my councel yet, or ye go, for fear ye walk in
waist.
It is a murrion crafty drab, and froward to be pleased,
And ye take not the better way, your needle yet ye lose it:
For when she took it up, even here before your doors,
What soft, dame *Chat*, (quoth I) that same is none of
yours.
Avaunt (quoth she) fir knave, what pratest thou of that I
find?
I wold thou hadst kist me I wot whear: (she ment I know
behind)

And

And home she went as brag as it had ben a bodelouce,
And I after her, as bold as it had ben the goodman of the
house:

But there and ye had hard her, how she began to scolde,
The tonge it were on patins, by him that *Judas* solde;
Ech other word I was a knave, and you a hore of hores,
Because I spake in your behalf, and said the neele was
yours.

Gammer.

Gogs bread! and thinks the callet thus to keep my
neele me fro?

Diccon.

Let her alone, and she minds none other, but even to
dres you so.

Gammer.

By the mass, chil rather spend the cots that is on my
backe.
Thinks the false quean by such a slight that chill my neele
lack?

Diccon.

Slip not your gere, I counsel you, but of this take good
hede,
Let not be known I told you of it, how well soever ye
spede.

Gammer.

Chil in, *Diccon*, a cleene aperne to take and set before
me;
And ich may my neele once see, chil sure remember
the.

THE SECOND ACTE. THE FIFTH SCEANE.

Discon.

Here will the sport begin, if these two once may meet,
 Their chere, durst lay money, will prove scarcely sweet.
 My gammer sure intends to be upon her bones,
 With staves, or with clubs, or els with coble stones.
 Dame *Chat* on the other side, if she be fare behinde,
 I am right far deceived, she is geven to it of kinde.
 He that may tarry by it a while, and that but short,
 I warrant him trust to it, he shall see all the sport.
 Into the town will I, my frendes to vyfit there;
 And hether straight again to see th'end of this gere:
 In the mean time, felowes, pype up your fiddles, I say,
 take them,
 And let your frendes here such mirth as ye can make
 them.

THE THIRD ACTE. THE FIRST SCEANE.

Hodge.

SYM *Glover*! yet gramercy cham meetley well sped
 now,
 Th'art even as good a fellow as ever kiste a cowe.
 Here is a thong in dede, by the mafs though ich speak it,
Tom Tankard's great bald curtal, I think could not break it.
 And when he spyed my neede, to be so straight and hard,
 Hays lent me here his naul, to set the gib forward.
 As for my gammer's neele, the flyenge feind go weet,
 Chill not now go to the door again with it to meet.
 Chould make shift good enough, and chad a candle's end.
 The cheefe hole in my breeche, with these two chill
 amend.

THE

THE THIRD ACTE. THE SECOND SCENE.

Gammer. Hodge.

Gammer.

How, *Hodge*! mayst now be glad, cha news to tell thee,
Ich know who hais my neele, ich trust soon shalt it see.

Hodge.

The devil thou does: hast hard gammer in deed, or
doest but jest?

Gammer.

'Tis as true as steel, *Hodge*.

Hodge.

Why, know'st well where didst leese it?

Gammer.

Ich know who found it, and took it up, shalt see or it
be long.

Hodge.

God's mother dere, if that be true, farwel both naul
and thong.

But who has it, gammer, say? one should fain here it
disclosed.

Gammer.

That false fixen, that same dame *Chat*, that counts her
self so honest.

Hodge.

Who told you so?

Gammer.

That same did *Diccon* the bedlam, which saw it done.

Hodge.

Diccon! it is a vengeable knave, gammer, tis a bonable
horfon,

Can do mo things than that, els cham deceyved evil:
By the mass, ich saw him of late call up a great black
devil.

O, the

O, the knave cryed ho, ho, roared and he thundred,
And ye'ad bene there, cham fure you'd murrenly ha
wondred.

Gammer.

Was not thou afraid, *Hodg*, to see him in this place?

Hodge.

No, and chad come to me, chould have laid him on
the face,
Chould have promised him.

Gammer.

But, *Hodge*, had he no horns to push?

Hodge.

As long as your two arms. Saw ye never fryer *Rusbe*
Painted on a cloth, with a side long cowe's taylor,
And crooked cloven feet, and many a hoked nayle?
For al the world (if I shuld judg) chould reckon him his
brother:

Like even what face frier *Rusbe* had, the devil had sach
another.

Gammer.

Now *Jesus* mercy, *Hodge*, did *Diccon* in him bring?

Hodge.

Nay, gammer, (heare me speak) chil tell you a greater
thing.

The devil, when *Diccon* had him (ich hard him wondrous
weel)

Said plainly (here before us) that dame *Chat* had your
neele.

Gammer.

Then let us go, and ask her wherefore she minds to
keep it,

Seing we know so much, twere madness now to slepe it.

Hodge.

Go to her, gammer, see ye not where she stands in her
doors?

Bid her geve you the neele, tis none of hers but yours.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 403

THE THIRD ACTE. THE THIRD SCEANE.

Gammer. Chat. Hodge.

Gammer.

Dame Chat, cholde pray the fair, let me have that is mine,

Chil not this twenty yeres take on fart that is thine;
Therefore give me mine own, and let me live beside the.

Chat.

Why, art thou crept from home hether to mine own doors to chide me?

Hence, doting drab, avaunt, or I shall set the further.
Intends thou and this knave, mee in my house to murder?

Gammer.

Tush! gape not so; no, woman, shalt not yet eat mee,
Nor all the friends thou hast, in this shall not intreat mee;

Mine own Goods I will have, and ask the no beleve:
What, woman; pore folks must have right, though the thing you agreve.

Chat.

Give thee thy right, and hang the up, with all thy begger's broode;

What, wilt thou make me a theefe, and say I stole thy good?

Gammer.

Chil say nothing (ich warrant thee) but that ich can prove it well,

Thou fet my good even from my door, cham able this to tell.

Chat.

Did I (old witch) steal oft was thine?
how should that thing be known?

Gammer.

Ich can not tell, but up thou tokeft it as though it had bin thine own.

Chat.

204 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Chat.

Mary, fy on thee, thou old *Gib*, with all my very hart.

Gammer.

Nay, fy on thee thou rampe, thou rig, with al that take thy part.

Chat.

A vengeance on those lips that layeth such thing to my charge.

Gammer.

A vengeance on those callets hips, whose conscience is so large.

Chat.

Come out, hogge.

Gammer.

Come out, hog, and let have me right.

Chat.

Thou argant witche.

Gammer.

Thou bawdie bitche, chil make thee curse this night.

Chat.

A bag and a wallet.

Gammer.

A carte for a callet.

Chat.

Why, wenest thou thus to prevaile?

I holde thee a grote,

I shall patche thy coat.

Gammer.

Thou wart as good kifs my tayl,

Thou slut, thou kut, thou rakes, thou jakes, will not shame make the hide the?

Chat.

Thou skald, thou bald, thou rotten, thou glotton, I will no longer chide the;

But I will teach thee to keep home.

Gammer.

Wilt thou, drunken heast?

Hodge.

Hodge.

Stick to her, gammer, take her by the head, chil warrant
you this feast.

Smite, I say, gammer,

Bite, I say, gammer.

I trowe ye will be keene :

Where be your nails ? claw her by the jawes, pull me
out both her eyen.

Gog's bones, gammer, hold up her head.

Chat.

I trow, drab, I shall dresse thee.

Tary, you knave, I hold the a grote, I shall make theſe
hands bleſs thee.

Take thou this, old hore, for amends, and learne thy
thy tonge well to tame.

And ſay thou met at this bickering, not thy fellow but
thy dame.

Hodge.

Where is the ſtrong ſtued hore ? chil ge'r a hore's
mark :

Stand out one's way, that ich kill none in the dark.

Up, gammer, and ye be alive, chil feight now for us
both.

Come no nere me, thou ſcalde callet, to kill the ich wer
loth.

Chat.

Art here again, thou hoddypeke ? what, *Doll*, bring me
out my ſpitte.

Hodge.

Chill broche thee with this, by'm father's ſoul, chill
conjure that foule ſprete.

Let dore ſtand, *Cock*, why comes indeed ? keep dore, thou
horſon, boy.

Chat.

Stand to it, thou daſtard, for thine ears, iſe teche the
a fluttish coy.

Hodge.

Hodge.

Gog's wounds, hore, chill make the avaunt.

Take heed, *Cock*, pull in the latche.

Chat.

I faith, fir loose-breche, had ye taried ye shold have found your match.

Gammer.

Now ware thy throte, losel, thowse pay for all.

Hodge.

Well said, gammer, by my soul.

Hoise her, fouse her, bounce her, trounce her, pull her throte houle.

Chat.

Comst thou behind me, thou withered witch ? and I get once on foot,

Thowse pay for all, thou old tarlether, we teach the what long to it.

Take the this to make up thy mouth, till time thou come by more.

Hodge.

Up, gammer, stand on thy feet, where is the old hore ?
Faith, would chad her by the face,
choulde crack her callet crown.

Gammer.

Ah, *Hodg, Hodg*, where was thy help, when *fixen* had me down ?

Hodge.

By the mafs, gammer, but for my staffe,

Chat had gone nye to spyl you.

Ich think the harlot had not cared, and chad not com, to kil you.

But shall we loose our neele thus ?

Gammer.

No, *Hodg*, chwarde lothe dao foo.

Thinkest thou child take that at her hand ? no *Hodge*, ich tell the no.

Hodge.

Hodge.

Chold yet this fray were wel take up, and our own
neele at home.
"Twill be my chaunce els some to kil, where ever it be
or whom.

Gammer.

We have a parson, (*Hodge*) thou knowest, a man
esteemed wife,
Maist doctor *Rat*, chil for him send, and let me hear his
advise.
He will her thrive for all this gere, and geve her penance
strait,
Wese have our neele, els dame *Chat* comes nere with in
heaven gate.

Hodge.

Ye mary, gammer, that ich think best: will you for
him now send?
The sooner doctor *Rat* be here, the sooner wese ha an
end.
And here gammer, *Diccon's* devil (as ich remember
well)
Of *Cat* and *Chat*, and doctor *Rat*, a felloneous tale did
tell,
Chold you forty pound, that is the way your neele to get
again.

Gammer.

Chil ha him strait; call out the boy, wese make him
take the pain.

Hodge.

What, *Cock*, I say, come out; what devil can'tt not
here?

Cock.

How now, *Hodge*, how does, gammer? is yet the wether
clear?
What wold chawe me to doo?

Gammer.

*Gammer.*Come hether, *Cock*, anon.Hence swithe to doctor *Rat*, hye the that thou were
gone,And pray him come speke with me, cham not well at
ease,Shalt have him at his chamber, or els at mother *Bee's*,
Els seek him at *Hobfilder's* shop; for, as charde it re-
ported,Thers is the best ale in all the town, and now is most
resorted.*Cock.*And shall ich bring him with me, *Gammer*?*Gammer.*Yea, by and by, good *Cock*.*Cock.*Shalt see that shall be here anone, els let me have on
that dock.*Hodge.*Now, gammer, shall we two go in, and tary for his
coming?What devil, woman, pluck up your hart, and leve of al
this gloming.Though she were stronger at the first, as ich think ye did
find her.*Gammer.*Yet there ye drest the drunken sow, what time ye cam
behind her.Nay, nay, cham sure she lost not all, for set them to the
beginning,And ich doubt not, but she wil make smal boost of her
winning.

THE THIRD ACTE. THE FOURTH SCENE.

Tib. Hodge. Gammer. Cock.

Tib.

Se, gammer, gammer, *Gib* our cat, cham afraid what
she ayleth,
She stands me gasping behind the door,
as though her winde her faileth;
Now let ich doubt what *Gib* shuld mean, that now she
doth so dote.

Hodge.

Hold hether, ichould twenty pound, your neele is in
her throte.
Grope her, ich say, me thinks ich feele it; does not prick
your hand?

Gammer.

Ich can feele nothing.

Hodge.

No? ich know thar's not within this land
A muriner cat then *Gib* is, betwixt the *Tems* and *Tine*,
Shafe as much wit in her head almost as chave in mine.

Tib.

Faith, shafe eaten some thing, that will not easely
down,
Whether she gat it at home, or abroad in the town,
Ich cannot tell.

Gammer.

Alas! ich fear it be some crooked pin,
And then farewel *Gib*, she is undone, and lost all save the
skin.

Hodge.

'Tis your neele, woman, I say: Gog's soul, gave me
a knife,
And chil have it out of her maw: or else chil lose my
life.

VOL. I.

O

Gammer.

210 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Gammer.

What? nay, *Hodge*, fy, kill not our cat, 'tis al the cats
we ha now.

Hodge.

By the ma's, dame *Cbat* hays me so moved, ich care
not what I kill, ma God a vowe.
Go to then, *Tib*, to this geare, hold up her tayle and take
her,
Chil se what devil is in her guts, chil take the pains to
rake her.

Gammer.

Rake a cat, *Hodge*! what wouldst thou do?

Hodge.

What, thinck'st that cham not able?
Did not *Tom Tankard* rake his curtal toore day standing in
the stable?

Gammer.

Soft, be content, let's here what news
Cock bringeth from maister *Rat*.

Cock.

Gammer, chave ben ther as you bad, you wot well about
what.
'Twill not be long before he come, ich durst swear of a
book;
He bids you see ye be at home, and there for him to
look.

Gammer.

Where didst thou finde him, boy? was he not wher I
told thee?

Cock.

Yes, yes, even at *Hobflicber's* house, by him that bought
and sold me:
A cup of ale had in his hand, and a crab lay in the fier,
Chad much a do to go and come, all was so full of mier:
And, gammer, one thing I can tell, *Hobflicber's* naule was
loste,
And doctor *Rat* found it again, hard beside the door
poste.

Ichould

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 211

Ichould a penny can say something, your neele again to fet.

Gammer.

Cham glad to hear so much, *Cock*, then trust he will
not let
To help us herein best he can; therefore till time he
come,
Let us goe in, if there be ought to get thou shall have
some.

THE FOURTH ACTE. THE FIRST SCENE.

Doctor Rat. Gammer Gurton.

Doctor Rat.

A Man were better twenty times be a bandog and
barke,
Then here among such a sort, be parish priest or clarke.
Where he shall never be at rest, one pissing while a day,
But he must trudge about the towne, this way, and that
way.
Here to a drab, there to a theefe, his shoes to tear and
rent,
And that which is worst of all, at every knave's com-
mandment.
I had not fit the space to drinke two pots of ale,
But *gammer Gurton's* sory boy was straite way at my taile;
And she was ficke, and I must come, to do I wot not
what:
If once her fingers end but ake, trudge, call for doctor
Rat.
And when I come not at their call, I only thereby loose,
For I am sure to lacke therefore a tythe pyg or a goose.

O 2

I warrant

212 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

I warrant you when truth is known, and told they have
their tale,

The matter where about I come,

is not worth a half penny worth of ale:

Yet must I talke so sage and smothe, as though I were a
glosser,

Els or the yer come at an end, I shal be sure the loser.

What worke ye, gammer Gurton? now here is your friend
doct^r Rat.

Gammer.

A, good Mr. doct^r, cha troubled, cha troubled you,
chwot wel that.

Doct^r Rat.

How do ye, woman? be ye luffie, or be ye not well at
ease?

Gammer.

By Gys, master, cham not sick, but yet chave a discaise.
Chad a foule turne now of late, chill tell it you by gigs.

Doct^r Rat.

Hath your browne cow cast her calfe, or your sandy
sowe her pigs?

Gammer.

No, but chad b^yn as good as they had, as this, ich wot
weel.

Doct^r Rat.

What is the matter?

Gammer.

Alas, alas, cha lost my good neele.

My neele, I say; and wot ye what? a drab came by and
spied it,

And when I asked her for the same, the filth, flayly,
denied it.

Doct^r Rat.

What was she that —

Gammer.

A dame, ich warrant you: we began to scold, and
brawle;

Alas, alas, come hether, Hodge; this wretche can tell
you all.

THE FOURTH ACTE. THE SECOND SCENE.

Hodge. Doctor Rat. Gammer. Diccon, Chat.

Hodge.

God morow, gaffer vicar.

Doctor Rat.

Come on, fellow, let us heare,
Thy dame hath said to me, thou knowest of all this geare,
Let's see what thou canst say.

Hodge.

By'm fay, fir, that ye shall,
What matter soever here was done, ich can tell your
maship:

My gammer *Gurton* here, see now,
sat her down at this door, see now,
And as she began to stir her, see now,
her neele fell in the floore, see now;
And while her staffe she took, see now,
at *Gib* her cat to fling; see now,
Her neele was lost in the floore, see now:
is not this a wondrous thing, see now?
Then came the quean dame *Chat*, see now,
to ask for hir black cup, see now:
And even here at this gate, see now,
she took the neele up, see now;
My gammer then she yeede, see now,
hir neele again to bring, see now,
And was caught by the head, see now:
is not this a wondrous thing, see now?
She tare my gammer's cote, see now,
and scratched hir by the face, see now;
Chad thought sh'ad stopt her throte, see now:
is not this a wondrous case, see now?

214 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

When ich saw this, ich was wroth, see now,
and start between them twain, see now,
Els ich durst take a book othe, see now,
my gammer had been slain, see now.

Gammer.

This is even the whole matter, as *Hodg* hath plainly
told.

And chould fain be quiet for my part, and chould.
But help us, good master, beseech ye that ye doo,
Els shall we both be beaten, and lose our neele too.

Doctor Rat.

What wold ye have me to doo? tell me, that I were
gone,
I do the best that I can, to set you both at one.
But be ye sure, dame *Cbat* hath this your neele found?

Gammer.

Here comes the man, that see her take it up off the
ground,
Ask him yourself, master *Rat*, if ye believe not me,
And help me to my neele, for God's take, and saint
Charitie.

Doctor Rat.

Come nere, *Diccon*, and let us hear what thou can
expres.
Wilt thou be sworne, seeft dame *Cbat* this woman's neele
have?

Diccon.

Nay, by *S. Benit* will I not, then might ye think me
rave.

Gammer.

Why, didst not thou tell me so eyen here? canst thou
for shame deny it?

Diccon.

I mary, gammer: but I said I wold not abide by it.

Doctor Rat.

Will you say a thing, and not sicke to it to trie it?

Diccon.

Diccon.

Stick to it, quoth you, master *Rat*? marry, fir, I defy it.

Nay, there is many an honest man, when he suche blastes, hath blowne

In his friende's ears, he woulde be loth the same by him were knowne:

If such a toy be used oft among the honestie,

It may beseme a simple man, of your and my degree.

Doctor Rat.

Then we be never the nearer, for all that you can tell.

Diccon.

Yes, mary, fir, if ye will do by mine advise and counsaile.

If mother *Cbat* se al us here, she knoweth how the matter goes,

Therefore I rede you three go hence, and within keep close;

And I will into dame *Cbat's* house, and so the matter use,

That or ye cold go twice to church, I warrant you here news.

She shall looke well about her, but I durst lay a pledge,

Ye shall of gammer's neele have shortly better knowledge.

Gammer.

Now, gentle *Diccon*, do so; and, good fir, let us trudge.

Doctor Rat.

By the masse, I may not tarry so long to be your judge.

Diccon.

Tys but a little while, man; what, take so much paine: If I heie no newes of it, I will come sooner againe.

Hodge.

Tary so much, good master *Doctor*, of your gentlenes.

Doctor Rat.

Then let us hie inward; and, *Diccon*, speede thy business.

Diccon.

Diccon.

Now, fir, do you no more, but kepe my counsaile
 juſt,
 And doctor *Rat* ſhall thus catch ſome good, I truſt;
 But mother *Chat*, my goſſap, talke firſt with all I muſt,
 For ſhe muſt be chief captain to lay the *Rat* in the duſt.
 God deven, dame *Chat*, in faith, and well met in this
 place.

Chat.

God deven, my friend *Diccon*, whether walke ye this
 pace?

Diccon.

By my truth even to you, to learne how the world
 goeth.
 Hard ye no more of the other matter, ſay me now by
 your troth?

Chat.

O yes, *Diccon*: here the olde hoore, and *Hodge* that
 great knave,
 But in faith, I would thou hadſt ſene, O Lord! I dreſt
 them brave.
 She bare me two or three ſouſes behind, in the nape of
 the necke,
 Till I made her olde weſen to anſwer again, kecke.
 And *Hodge*, that dirty daſtard, that at her elbow ſtandes,
 If one paire of legs had not bene worth two paire of
 hands,
 He had had his beard ſhaven, if my nayles wold have
 ſerved,
 And not without a cauſe, for the knave it well deſerved.

Diccon.

By the maſſe, I con the thank, wench, thou diſt ſo
 well acquite the.

Chat.

And th'adſt ſeene him, *Diccon*, it wold have made the
 beſhite the

For

For laughter: the horfen dolt, at last caught up a club,
As though he would have slaine the master devil, *Belsabub*;
But I set him soone inwarde.

Diccon.

O Lord! there is the thing,
That *Hodge* is so offended, that makes him starte and
flyng.

Chat.

Why, makes the knave any moyling, as ye have scene
or hard?

Diccon.

Even now I sawe him last, like a mad man he farde,
And sware by heaven and hell, he would a wreake his
sorrow,
And leve you never a hen alive by eight of the clock to
morow:
Therefore mark what I say, and my words see that ye
trust;
Your hens be as good as dead, if ye leave them on the
ruste.

Chat.

The knave dare as well go hang himself, as go upon
my ground.

Diccon.

Wal, yet take hede, I say, I must tell you my tale
round:
Have you not about your house, behind your furnace or
leade,
A hole where a crafty knave may creep in for neade?

Chat.

Yes, by the masse, a hole broke down even within these
two dayes.

Diccon.

Hodg, he intends this same night to slip in there
awayes.

Chat.

O *Chriss*, that I were sure of it! in faith he shuld have
his mede.

Diccon.

218 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Diccon.

Watch wel, for the knave wil be there as sure as is
your crede;
I wold spend my selfe a shilling to have him swinged well.

Cbat.

I am as glad as a woman can be of this thing to here
tell;
By gog's bones, when he cometh, now that I know the
matter,
He shall sure at the first skip, to leape in scalding water:
With a worse turne besides, when he will, let him come.

Diccon.

I tell you as my sifter, you know what meaneth, mum.
Now lake I but my doctor, to playe his parte againe,
And lo, where he cometh towards, peradventure to his
paine.

Doctor Rat.

What good newes, *Diccon*? fellow, is mother *Cbat* at
home?

Diccon.

She is syr, and she is not; but it please her to
whome:
Yet did I take her tardy, as subtile as she was.

Doctor Rat.

The thing that thou went'st for, hast thou brought it
to passe?

Diccon.

I have done that I have done, be it worse, be it
better,
And dame *Cbat* at her wyt's ende, I have almost set her.

Doctor Rat.

Why, hast thou spied the neele? quickly I pray thee
tell.

Diccon.

I have spied it in faith, sir, I handled my selfe so
well;

And

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 219

And yet the crafty queane had almost take my trumpe ;
But or all came to an ende, I set her in a dumpe.

Doctor Rat.

How so, I pray thee, *Diccon*?

Diccon.

Mary, fir, will ye heare ?

She was clapt downe on the backside, by *Cock's* mother
dere,

And there she sat sowing a halter, or a bande,
With no other thing, but gammer's neele in her hande :
As soon as any knocke, if the filth be in doubt, she
needes but once puffle, and her candle is out :
Now I, fir, knowing of every doore the pin,
Came nicely, and said no worde, till time I was within,
And there I saw the neele, even with these two eyes.
Who ever say the contrary, I will sweare he lyes.

Doctor Rat.

O *Diccon*, that I was not there then in thy steade !

Diccon.

Well, if ye will be ordred, and do by my reade,
I will bring you to a place, as the house standes,
Where ye shall take the drab with the neele in her handes.

Doctor Rat.

For God's sake, do so, *Diccon*, and I will gage my
gowne,
To geve the a full pot of the best ale in the towne.

Diccon.

Follow me but a little, and mark what I say,
Lay downe your gown beside you, go to, come on your
way :

Se ye not what is here ? a hole wherein ye may creepe
Into the house, and sodenly unawares among them leape ;
There shal ye find the bich-fox, and the neele together.
Do as I bid you, man, come on your ways hether.

Doctor Rat.

Art thou sure, *Diccon*, the swel-tub standes not here
about ?

Diccon.

I was within myfelfe, man, even now, there is no doubt;

Go softly, make no noife, give me your foote, fir *John*,
Here will I waite upon you, till you come out anon.

Doctor Rat.

Help, *Diccon*, out alas, I fhall be flain among them.

Diccon.

If they give you not the needle, tel them that ye will hang them.

Ware that, how my wenchcs, have ye caught the foxe,
That ufed to make revel among your henncs and cocks?
Save his life yet for his order, though he fufteine fome paine.

Gog's bread, I am afraid they will beat out his braine.

Doctor Rat.

Wo worth the houre that I came heare,
And wo worth him that wrought this geare;
A fort of drabs and queans have me bleft,
Was ever creature halfe fo evil drest?
Who ever it wrought, and firft did invent it,
He fhall, I warrant him, ere long repent it.
I will fpend all I have without my fkin,
But he fhall be brought to the plight I am in;
Mafter *Bayly* I trow, and he be worth his cares,
Will fnaffe thefe murderers, and all that them beares:
I will furely neither byte nore fuppe,
Till I fetch him hether, this matter to take up.

THE FIFTH ACTE. THE FIRST SCENE.

Master Bayly. Doctor Rat.

Bayly.

I Can perceive none other, I speak it from my heart,
But either ye are all in the fault, or els in the greatest
part.

Doctor Rat.

If it be counted his fault, besides all his greeves,
When a poor man is spoyled, and beaten among theeves,
Then I onfess my fault herein, at this season;
But I hope you will not urge so much against reason.

Bayly.

And me thinkes by your own tale, of all that ye
name,
If any plaid the theefe, you were the very same:
The women they did nothing, as your words made
probation,
But stoutly withstood your forcible invasion.
If that a theefe at your window to enter should begin,
Wold you hold forth your hand, and help to pull him
in?

Or wold you kepe him out? I pray you answer me.

Doctor Rat.

Mary hope him out: and a good cause why.
But I am no theefe, fir, but an honest learned clarke.

Bayly.

Yea, but who knoweth that, when he meets you in
the dark?

I am

I am sure your learning shines not out at your nose.
 Was it any marvaile, though the poor woman arose,
 And strat up, being afraide of that was in hir purse?
 Me thinke you may be glad that your lucke was no worse.

Doctor Rat.

Is not this evil ynough, I pray you thinke?

[Shewing his broken head.]

Bayly.

Yea, but a man in the darke, if chaunces do wincke,
 As soone meets his father as any other man,
 Because, for lacke of light, decerne him he ne can.
 Might it not have bene your lucke with a spit to have
 bene slain?

Doctor Rat.

I think I am little better, my scalpe is cloven to the
 brain:
 If there be all the remedy, I know who beares the
 knockes.

Bayly.

By my truth, and well worthy besides to kisse the
 stockes.
 To come in on the backe side, when ye might go about,
 I know non such, unles they long to have their braines
 knockt out.

Doctor Rat.

Well, will you be so good, sir, as talke with dame
Chat,
 And know what she intended? I aske no more but that.

Bayly.

Let her be called, fellow, because of master doctor,
 I warrant in this case, she will be hir owne proctor:
 She will tell hir owne tale in metter or in prose,
 And byd you seeke your remedy, and so go wbye your
 nose.

THE FIFTH ACTE. THE SECOND SCEANE.

M. Baily. Cbat. D. Rat. Gammer. Hodge. Diccon.

Baily.

Dame *Cbat*, master doctör upon you here complained,
That you and your maides shuld him much disorder,
And taketh many an oth, that no word be fained,
Laying to your charge, how you thought him to murder :
And on his part againe, that same man saith further,
He never offended you in word or intent ;
To heare you answer hereto, we have now for you sent.

Cbat.

That I wold have murdered him ! fye on him wretch,
And evil mought he thee for it, our Lord I beseech.
I will swere on all the bookes that opens and shuttes
He faineth this tale out of his owne guttes.
For this seven weekes with me, I am sure, he sat not
downe ;

Nay ye have other minions in the other end of the town,
Where ye were liker to catch such a blow
Then any where els, as farre as I know.

Baily.

Be like then, master doctör, your stripe there ye got
not.

Doctör Rat.

Think you I am so mad, that where I was bet I wot
not ?

Will ye believe this queane, before she hath try'd it ?
It is not the first dede she hath done, and afterward
denide it.

Cbat.

What, man, will you say I broke your heade ?

Doctör Rat.

How canst thou prove the contrary ?

Cbat.

224 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Chat.

Nay, how provest thou that I did the deade ?

Doctor Rat.

Too plainly by S. Mary.

This profe, I trow, may serve, though I no word spoke.
[*Showing his broken head.*]

Chat.

Because thy head is broken, was it I that it broke ?
I saw thee, *Rat*, I tel thee, not once within this fortnight.

Doctor Rat.

No, mary, thou sawest me not ; for why ? thou hadst
no light :
But I felt thee for all the darke, beshrew thy smothe
cheekes !
And thou groped me, this wil declare any day this six
weekes. [*Showing his head.*]

Bayly.

Answer me to this, M. *Rat*, when caught you this
harme of yours ?

Doctor Rat.

A while a go, sir, God he knoweth ; within les then
these two hours.

Bayly.

Dame *Chat*, was there none with you (confesse I faith)
about that season ?

What, woman, let it be what it wil, 'tis neither felony
nor treason.

Chat.

Yes, by my faith, master *Bayly*, there was a knave not
farre,

Who caught one good philup on the brow with a dore-
barre.

And well was he worthy, as it seemed to me ;

But what is that to this man, since this was not he ?

Bayly.

Who was it then ? let's here.

Doctor

Doctor Rat.

Alas, sir, ask you that?

Is it not made plain inough by the own mouth of dame
Cbat?

The time agreeth, my head is broken, her tong cannot
lie;

Only upon a bare nay, she saith it was not I.

Cbat.

No, mary, was it not indeed; ye shall here by this one
thing:

This afternoón a friend of mine, for good-will gave me
warning,

And bad me wel loke to my ruste, and all my capons
pennes;

For if I toke not better heed, a knave wold have my
hennes.

Then I, to save my goods, toke so much pains as him to
watch;

And as good fortune served me, it was my chance him
for to catch.

What strooks he bare away, or other what was his
gains,

I wot not; but, sure I am, he had something for his
pains.

Bayly.

Yet tells thou not who it was.

Cbat.

Who it was? A false theefe,

That came like a false foxe, my pullain to kil and
mischeeffe.

Bayly.

But knowest thou not his name?

Cbat.

I know it, but what than?

It was that crafty callyon *Hodge*, my gammer *Gurton's*
man.

226 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Baily.

Cal me the knave hether, he shall sure kisse the
stockes.

I shall teach him a lesson for filching hens or cocks.

Doffor Rat.

I marvail, master *Baily*, so bleared be your eyes!
An egge is not so full of meat, as she is full of lies:
When she hath plaid this pranke, to excuse all this geare,
She layeth the fault on such a one, as I know was not
there.

Chat.

Was he not there? loke on his pate; that shalbe his
witness.

Doffor Rat.

I wold my head were halfe so hole, I wold seek no
redresse.

Baily.

God bleffe you, gammer *Gurton*.

Gammer.

God dilde you, master mine.

Baily.

Thou hast a knave within thy house, *Hodge*, a servant
of thine.

They tell me that busie knave is such a filching one,
That hen, pig, goose, or capon, thy neighbour can have
none.

Gammer.

By God, cham much ameved, to hear anie such report:
Hodge was not wont, ich trow, to have him in that sort.

Chat.

A theevisher knave is not on live, more filching, nor
more false;

Manie a truer man than he has been hanged up by the
halfe.

And thou his dame, of all his theft thou art the sole
receaver;

For *Hodge* to catch, and thou to keep, I never knew none
better.

Gammer.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 527

Gammer.

Sir, reverence of your maisterdom, and you were out of door,
Chold be so bold, for all her brags, to call hir arrant whore.

And ich knew *Hodge* so bad as tow, ich wish me endlesse sorrow,

And should not take the pains to hang him up before to morrow.

Chat.

What have I stoln from the or thine, thou ilfavor'd old trot?

Gammer.

A greal deal more (by God blest) then chever by the got;

That thou knowest well, I need not say it.

Baily.

Stoppe there I say,

And tell me here, I pray you, this matter by the waie:
How chaunce *Hodge* is not here? him wold I fain have had.

Gammer.

Alas, fir, heel be here anon; ha be handled too bad.

Chat.

Master *Baily*, fir, ye be not such a fool, well I know,
But ye perceive by this lingring there is a pad in the straw.

*[Thinking that Hodg his head was broke,
and that gammer wold not let him come
before them.]*

Gammer.

Chil shew you his face, ich warrant the: — lo now
where he is!

Baily.

Come on, fellow; it is told me thou art a shrew I wyffe;

228 **GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.**

Thy neighbour's hens thou takest, and plaies the two
legged foxe ;
Their chickens, and their capons too, and now and then
their cocks.

Hodge.

Ich defy them all that dare it say ; cham as true as the
best.

Bailly.

Wart not thou take within this hour in dame *Chat's*
hens nest ?

Hodge.

Take there ! no, master, should not do't for a house ful
of gold.

Chat.

Thou art the devil in thy cote ; sware this I dare be
bold.

Doctor Rat.

Swear me no swearing, quean, the devil he geve the
forrow ;

As is not worth a gnat, thou canst swear till to morrow.
Where is the harme he hath ? shew it ; by God's bread,
Ye beat him with a witnes, but the stripes light on my
head.

Hodge.

Bet me ! Gog's blessed bodie, chold first, ich trow, have
burst the ;

Ich think, and chad my hands loose, callet, should have
crust the.

Chat.

Thou shitten knave, I trow, thou knowest the ful weight
of my fist.

I am fowlie deceived, unless thy head and my door-bar
kiste.

Hodge.

Hold thy chat, hore ; thou criest so loud, can no man
els be hard.

Chat.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 229

Chat.

Well, knave, and I had the alone, I wold surelie rap
thy coffard.

Baily.

Sir, answer me to this, Is thy head whole or broken?

Chat.

Yea, master *Baily*, blest be everie good token.

Hodge.

Is my head whole? ich warrant you, 'tis neither scurvy
nor scald:

What, you foul beast, does think 'tis either pild or bald?
Nay, ich thank God, chil not for all that thou maist
spend,

That chad one scab on my narfe as brode as thy finger's
end.

Baily.

Come nearer here.

Hodge.

Yes, that ich dare.

Baily.

By our lady, here is no harme;

Hodge's head is hole enough, for all dame *Chat's* charme.

Chat.

By Gog's blest, however the thing he clockes or
smolders,

I knew the blows he bare awaie, either with head or
shoulders.

Camest thou not, knave, within this hour, creeping into
my pens,

And there was caught within my house, groping among
my hens?

Hodge.

A plage both on thy hens and thee! a cart, whore, a
cart;

Chould I were hanged as hie as a tree, and chware as
false as thou art.

Geve my gammer again her waslical thou stole away in
thy lap.

230 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Gammer.

Yes, master *Bailly*, there is a thing you know not on
mayhap :

This drab she kepes away my good, (the devil he might
her snare)

Ich pray you, that ich might have a right action on her.

Chat.

Have I thy good, old filth, or any such old fowe's?
I am as true, I wold thou knew, as skin between thy
browes.

Gammer.

Many a truer hath been hang'd, though you escape the
danger.

Chat.

Thou shalt answer, by God's pitie, for this thy foul
flaunder.

Bailly.

Why, what can ye charge hir withal? to say so ye do
not wel.

Gammer.

Mary, a vengeance to hir hart, the whore has stola
my neele.

Chat.

Thy neele, old witch! how so? it were alms thy scul
to knock;

So didst thou say, the other day, that I had stola thy
cock,

And rosted him to my breakfast, which shall not be
forgotten;

The devil pul out thy lying tong, and teeth that be
rotten.

Gammer.

Gave me my neele; as for my cocke, should be verie
loth,

That chuld here tell he shuld hang on thy false faith and
troth.

Bailly.

Baily.

Your talke is such, I can scarce learn who shuld be most
in fault.

Gammer.

Yet shall ye find no other wight, save she, by bred
and salt.

Baily.

Kepe ye content a while, se that your tonges ye
hold;
Methinks you shuld remember, this is no place to scolde.
How knowest thou, gammer *Gurton*, dame *Cbat* thy nedle
had?

Gammer.

To name you, fir, the partie, chould not be very
glad.

Baily.

Yea, but we must needs hear it, and therefore saie it
boldlie.

Gammer.

Such one as told the tale, full soberlie and coldlie;
Even he that loked on, will sweare on a booke,
What time this drunken gossip my fair long neele up
tooke:

Diccon (master) the bedlam, cham very sure ye know
him.

Baily.

A false knave, by God's pitie! ye were but a fool to
trow him.

I durst aventure well the price of my best cap,
That when the ende is known, all will turn to a jape.
Told he not you that besides, she stole your cock that
tide?

Gammer.

No, master, no indeed, for then he shuld have lied;
My cocke is, I thanke *Cbrist*, safe and well a fine,

Cbat.

Yea, but that ragged colt, that whore, that *Tib* of
thine,

232 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE

Said plainlie thy cocke was stolne, and in my house was eaten;

That lying cut is loft, that she is not swinged and beaten;
And yet for all my good name, it were a small amends;
I picke not this geare (hear'st thou) out of my fingers ends.

But he that hard it told me, who thou of late didst name,

Diccon, whom all men knows, it was the verie same.

Baily.

This is the case; you lost your nedle about the dores;
And she answers again, she hafe no cock of yours:
Thus in your talke and action, from that you do intend,
She is whole five mile wide from that she doth defend.
Will you say she hath your cocke?

Gammer.

No, mary, fir, that chil not.

Baily.

Will you confesse hir neele?

Chat.

Will I? no, fir, will I not.

Baily.

Then there lieth all the matter.

Gammer.

Soft, master, by the way,
Ye know, she could do little, and she could not say naie.

Baily.

Yea, but he that made one lie about your cocke stealing,
Will not sticke to make another, what time lies be in dealing.

I weene, the end will prove this brawle did first arise
Upon no other ground, but only *Diccon's* lies.

Chat.

Though some be lies, as you belike have espied them,
Yet other some be true; by prooffe I have wel tried them.

Baily.

What other thing beside this, dame *Chat*?

Chat.

Chat.

Mary, fir, even this,
The tale I tulde before, the selfe same tale it was his;
He gave me, like a frende, warning against my losse,
Els had my hens been stoln eche one, by God's crosse.
He told me *Hodg* wold come, and in he came indeed;
But as the matter chaunsed, with greater hast then speed.
This truth was said, and true was found, as trulie I
report.

Baily.

If doctör *Rat* be not deceived, it was o' another fort.

Doctör Rat.

By God's mother, thou and he be a cople of futtle
foxes;
Between you and *Hodge*, I bear awaie the boxes.
Did not *Diccon* appoint the place, where thou shuld'st
stand to meet him?

Chat.

Yes, by the masse; and if he came, bad me not sticke
to speet hym.

Doctör Rat.

God's sacrament! the villain knave hath drest us round
about;
He is the cause of all this brawl, that dirty shitten loute.
When gammer *Gurton* here complained, and made a ruful
mone,
I heard him swear that you had gotten hir nedle that was
gone.
And this to try he further said, he was full loth; how
be it
He was content with small ado to bring me where to
see it.
And where ye sat, he saith ful certain, if I wold follow
his read,
Into your house a privy waie he wold me guid and
lead,

And

234 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

And where ye had it in your hands, sewing about a
clowt,

And set me in the backe hole, thereby to finde you out:
And whiles I sought a quietnes, creeping upon my knees,
I found the weight of your deer-bar, for my reward and
fees.

Such is the lucke that some men gets, while they begin
to mel,

In setting at one such as were out, minding to make all
well.

Hodge.

Was not well blest, gammer, to scape that scour? and
chad been there,

Then chad ben drest, belike, as ill (by the masse) as
gaffer vicar.

Baily.

Mary, sir, here is a sport alone; I loked for such an
end;

If *Diccon* had not plaid the knave, this had ben sone
amend.

My gammer here he made a fool, and drest hir as she
was;

And goodwife *Chat* he set to scold, till both parties cried,
alas!

And doctör *Rat* was not behind, whiles *Chat* his crowne
did pare;

I wold the knave had ben starke blind, if *Hodge*, had not
his share.

Hodge.

Cham meetlie wel sped alredie among's, cham drest
like a coult;

And chad not had the better wit, chad been made a
doul.

Baily.

Sir knave, make hast *Diccon* were here; fetch him where
ever he be.

Chat.

Fie on the villain, fie, fie, that makes us thus agree!

Gammer.

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 235

Gammer.

See on him, knave, with all my hart, now see, and see again!

Doctor Rat.

Now see on him, may I best saie, whom he hath almost slain.

Bailly.

Lo where he commeth at hand, belike he was not fare.

Diccon, here be two or three thy companie cannot spare.

Diccon.

God blesse you, and you maie be blest so manie all at once.

Chat.

Come, knave, it were a good deed to gled the, by cockes bones.

Seest not thy handiwarke? sir *Rat*, can you forbear him?

Diccon.

A vengeance on those hands life, for my hands cam not neer him.

The horsen priest hath lift the pot in some of these ale-wives chaires,

That his head wold not serve him, belike, to come down the staires.

Bailly.

Nay, soft, thou maist not plaie the knave, and have this language to;

If thou thy tong bridle a while, the better maist thou do. Confesse the truth as I shall ask, and cease a while to fable,

And for thy fault, I promise the, thy handling shalbe reasonable.

Hast thou not made a lie or two, to set these two by the ears?

Diccon.

What if I have? five hundred such have I seen within these seven years;

I am

236 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

I am sory for nothing else, but that I see not the sport
Which was between them when they met, as they themselves report.

Baily.

The greatest thing, master *Rat*, ye se how he is drest.

Diccon.

What devil need he be groping so deep in goodwife
Cbat's hen's nest?

Baily.

Yea, but it was thy drift to bring him into the
briars.

Diccon.

God's bread! hath not such an old fool wit to save his
cars?

He showeth himself herein, you see, so very coxe,
The cat was not so madly alured by the foxe,
To run into the snares was set for him doubtlesse;
For he leapt in for mice, and this sir *John* for madness.

Doctor Rat.

Well, and ye shift no better, ye losel, lither, and lasie,
I will go near for this to make ye leape at a dasie.
In the king's name, master *Baily*, I charge you set him
fast.

Diccon.

What! fast at cards, or on sleep? it is the thing I did
last.

Doctor Rat.

Nay, fast in fetters, false varlet, according to thy deeds.

Bayly.

Master *Doctor*, there is no remedy, I must intreat you
needs
Some other kinde of punishment.

Doctor Rat.

Nay, by all halows,
His punishment, if I may judge, shalbe naught els but the
gallows.

Baily.

Baily..

That were too sore; a spiritual man to be so ex-
tream!

Docter Rat.

Is he worthy any better, fir? how do you judge and
deam?

Baily.

I graunt him worthy punishment, but by no wise so
great.

Gammer.

It is a shame, ich tell you plain, for such false knaves
intreat.

He has almost undone us all, that is as true as steel:
And yet for all this great ado, cham never the nere my
neele.

Baily.

Can'st thou not say any thing to that, *Diccon*, with least
or most?

Diccon.

Yea, mary, fir, thus much I can say well, the neele is
lost.

Baily.

Nay, canst not thou tell which way that nedle may be
found?

Diccon.

No, by my say, fir, though I might have an hundred
pound.

Hodge.

Thou lier lickdish, didst not say the neele wold be
gitton?

Diccon.

No, *Hodge*; by the same token you were at that time
beslitten,
For fear of hobgobling, you wot well what I mean;
As long as it is sence, I fear me yet ye be scarce clean.

Baily.

238 GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE

Baily.

Well, master *Rat*, you must both learn, and teach us
to forgeve,
Since *Diccon* hath confession made, and is so clean
shreve :

If ye to me consent to amend this heavy chaunce,
I will injoin him here some open kind of penance :
Of this condition, where ye know my fee is twenty
pence,

For the bloodshed, I am agreed with you here to dis-
pence ;

Ye shall go quite, so that you graunt the matter now to
run,

To ende with mirth among us all, even as it was begun:
Chat.

Say ye, master vicar, and he shall sure confes to be
your detter,
And all we that be here present will love you much the
better.

Doſter Rat.

My part is the worst ; but since you all hereon agree,
Go even to master *Baily*, let it be so for me.

Baily.

How saiest thou, *Diccon*, art content this shall on me
depend ?

Diccon.

Go to, master *Baily*, say on your mind, I know ye are
my frend.

Baily.

Then marke you well ; to recompence this thy former
action,
Because thou hast offended all, to make them satisfaction,
Before their faces here kneel down, and as I shall the
teach,
For thou shalt take an othe on *Hodge's* leather-breath ;

First

GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE. 219

First for master *Doffor*, upon pain of his curffe,
Where he will pay for al, thou never draw thy purse;
And when ye meet at one pot, he shall have the first
pull;

And thou shalt never offer him the cup, but it be full.
To goodwife *Chat* thou shalt be sworn, even on the same
wife,

If she refuse thy money once, never to offer it twice.
Thou shalt be bound by the same here, as thou dost
take it,

When thou maist drinke of free cost, thou never forsake
it.

For gammer *Gurton's* sake again sworn thou shalt be,
To help hir to hir nedle again, if it do lie in thee;
And likewise be bound, by the vertue of that,
To be of good abeting to *Gib* hir great cat.
La ft ofall for *Hodge*, the othe to scanne,
Thou shalt never take him for fine gentleman.

Hodge.

Come on, fellow *Diccon*, chalbe even with thee now.

Baily.

Thou wilt not sticke to do this, *Diccon*, I trow?

Diccon.

No, by my father's skin, my hand down I lay it:
Loke, as I have promised, I will not deny it;
But, *Hodge*, take good heed now, thou do not beslite me.
[And gave him a good blow on the buttocks.]

Hodge.

Gogs hart, thou false villain, dost thou bite me?

Baily.

What, *Hodge*, doth he hurt the or ever he begin?

Hodge.

He thrust me into the buttocke with a bodkin or a
pin:

I say, gammer, gammer!

Gammer.

Gammer.

How now, *Hodge*, how now!

Hodge.

God's malt, gammer *Gurton*!

Gammer.

Thou art mad, ich trow.

Hodge.

Will you see the devil, gammer?

Gammer.

The devil, sonne! God bleffe us.

Hodge.

Chould iche were hanged, gammer.

Gammer.

Mary, se ye might dresse us.

Hodge.

Chave it, by the masse, gammer.

Gammer.

What, not my neele, *Hodge*?

Hodge.

Your neele, gammer, your neele.

Gammer.

No, fie, dost but dodge.

Hodge.

Cha found your neele, gammer, here in my hand b
it.

Gammer.

For all the loves on earth, *Hodge*, let me see it.

Hodge.

Soft, gammer.

Gammer.

Good *Hodge*.

Hodge.

Soft, ich say, tarie a while.

Gammer.

Nay, sweet *Hodge*, say truth, and not me begile.

Hodge

Hodge.

Cham sure on it; ich warrant you, it goes no more astray.

Gammer.

Hodge, when I speak so fair, wil still say me nay?

Hodge.

Go near the light, gammer, this well in faith good lucke:

Chwas almost undone, 'twas so far in my buttocke.

Gammer.

'Tis mine own dear neele, *Hodge*, sickerly I wot.

Hodge.

Cham I not a good sonne, gammer, cham I not?

Gammer.

Christ blessing light on thee, hast made me for ever.

Hodge.

Ich knew that ich must finde it, els should a had it never.

Chat.

By my troth, gossip *Gurton*, I am even as glad,
As though I mine own selfe as good a turn had.

Bailly.

And I by my conscience, to see it so come forth,
Rejoyce so much at it, as three nedles be worth.

Doctor Rat.

I am no whit sorry to see you so rejoyce.

Diccon.

Nor I much the glader for all this noice.
Yet say gramercie, *Diccon*, for springing of the game.

Gammer.

Gramercie, *Diccon*, twenty times; o how glad cham!
If that should do so much, your masterdome to come
hether,

Master *Rat*, goodwife *Chat*, and *Diccon* together;
Cha but one halspeny, as far as ich know it,
And chil not rest this night, till iche bestow it.
If ever ye love me, let us go in and drinke.

242 **GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.**

Bailly.

I am content, if the rest thinke as I thinke.
Master *Rat*, it shall be best for you if we so do,
Then shall you warme you and rest your selfe too.

Diccon.

Soft, firs, take us with you, the company shalbe the
more ;

As proude comes behinde, they say, as anie goes before.—
But now, my good masters, since we must be gone,
And leave you behinde us here all alone ;
Since at our last ending, thus mery we be,
For gammer *Gurton's* nedle sake, let us have a plaudity.

THE END OF GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

A LAMENTABLE TRAGEDY,

MIXED FULL OF PLEASANT MIRTH,

CONTEYNING THE LIFE

OF CAMBISES KING OF PERCIA,

FROM THE BEGINNING OF HIS KINGDOME

UNTO HIS DEATH,

HIS ONE GOOD DEED OF EXECUTION,

AFTER THAT MANY WICKED DEEDS

AND TIRANNOUS MURDERS

COMMITTED BY AND THROUGH HIM,

AND LAST OF ALL,

HIS ODIOUS DEATH BY GODS JUSTICE APPOINTED.

DOON IN SUCH ORDER AS FOLOWETH.

BY THOMAS PRESTON.



THE TRAGEDY OF CAMBISES.

This is the play that Shakespeare is supposed to allude to, when he introduces Falstaff speaking in king Cambises' vein, in the first part of Henry the fourth. It was written early in the reign of Elizabeth (according to some in 1561.) by Thomas Preston, M. A. fellow of King's College, and afterwards L. D. and master of Trinity Hall, in Cambridge. He performed so admirably well in the tragedy of Dido, before queen Elizabeth, when she was entertained in that university in 1564; and did so genteelly and gracefully dispute before her, that she gave him 20l. per ann. for so doing. See Thomas Hatcher, or his continuator, in the catalogue of provosts, fellows, and scholars of King's College. MS. under the year 1650. [Oldys' MS. notes on Langbaine.]

The play is here given from a black-letter copy in Mr. Garrick's collection, imprinted by John Allde: Ames informs his reader, that it was printed by Edward Allde; but this seems to be a mistake, for the earliest book we find printed by the latter is dated 1587. The prologue, and great part of Cambises was written by the author in long Alexandrines, which the narrowness of the page rendered it necessary here to subdivide.



THE DIVISION OF THE PARTES.

<i>Council.</i>	}	<i>For one man.</i>
HUF.		
PRAXASPES.		
<i>Murder.</i>		
LOB.		
<i>The 3 Lord.</i>		

<i>Lord.</i>	}	<i>For one man.</i>
RUF.		
<i>Commons cry.</i>		
<i>Commons Complaint.</i>		
Lord SMIRDIS.		
VENUS.		

<i>Knight.</i>	}	<i>For one man.</i>
SNUF.		
<i>Small habilitie.</i>		
<i>Proof.</i>		
<i>Execution.</i>		
<i>Attendance.</i>		
<i>Second Lord.</i>		

CAMBISES.	}	<i>For one man.</i>
<i>Epilogus.</i>		

<i>Prologue.</i>	}	<i>For one man.</i>
SISAMNES.		
<i>Diligence.</i>		
<i>Crueltie.</i>		
HOB.		
<i>Preparation.</i>		
<i>The 1 Lord.</i>		

AMBIDEXTER.

AMBIDEXTER. } *For one man.*
Triall.

Meretrix. }
Shame. } *For one man.*
OTIAN. }
Mother. }
Lady. }
Queene. }

Yung child. } *For one man.*
CUPID. }

THE

THE PROLOGUE ENTRETH.

A *GATHON*, he whose counsaile wife
to princes wele extended,

By good advice unto a prince
iii things he hath commended :

First is, that he hath government,
and ruleth over men ;

Secondly, to rule with lawes,
eke justice (saith he) then ;

Thirdly, that he must wel conceive,
he may not alwaies reign :

Lo, thus the rule unto a prince,
Agathon squared plaine.

Tully the wise whose sapience,
in volumes great dooth tel,

Who in wisdome, in that time
did many men excel,

A prince (saith he) is of himself,
a plain and speaking law,

The law, a schoole maister divine,
this by his rule I drawe.

The sage and witty *Seneca*,
his words thereto did frame ;

The honest exercise of kings,
men wil insue the same.

But contrary wise if that a king,
abuse his kingly seat,

His ignomy and bitter shame,
in fine shalbe more great.

In *Percia* there reignd a king,
who *Cirus* hight by name,

Who did deserve, as I doo read,
the lasting blast of fame :

But he, when sisters three had wrought,
to there his vitall thred,

As heire due to take the crown,
Cambices did proceed ;

He

He in his youth was trained up,
 by trace of vertues lore,
 Yet (being king) did cleene forget
 his perfect race before.
 Then cleaving more unto his wil
 such vice did immitate,
 As one of *Icarus* his kinde,
 forwarning then did hate;
 Thinking that none could him dismay,
 ne none his facts could see;
 Yet at the last a fall he took,
 like *Icarus* to bee.
 Els as the fish, which oft had take
 the pleasant bait from hook,
 In safe did spring, and pearce the streames,
 when fisher fast did looke,
 To hoist up from the watry waves
 unto the dried land,
 Then scaept, at last by futtle baight
 come to the fishers hand:
 Even so this king *Cambises* heer,
 when he had wrought his wil,
 Taking delight the innocent,
 his giltlesse blood to spil;
 Then mightie *Jove* would not permit,
 to prosecute offence,
 But what measure the king did meat,
 the same did *Jove* commence.
 To bring to end with shame his race,
 two yeeres he did not reign:
 His crueltie we wil dilate,
 and make the matter plain;
 Craving that this may suffise now,
 your patience to win:
 I take my way; beholde, I see
 the players comming in.

F I N I S.

A C O M M E D Y
O F
K I N G C A M B I S E S.

First enter Cambises the King, Knight and Councillor.

Cambises.

MY counsaile grave and sapient,
with lords of legal train,
Attentive cares towards bend,
and mark what shalbe sain. —
So you likewise, my valiant knight,
whose manly acts doth fly,
By brute of fame the sounding trump
dooth perse the azure sky :
My sapient woords, I say perpend,
and so your skil delate.
You knowe, that *Mors* vanquished hath
Cirus that king of state ;
And I by due inheritance
posseffe that princely crown,
Ruling by swoord of mightie force
in place of great renown,

You

You knowe, and often have heard tel
my fathers worthy facts ;

A manly *Marfis* hart he bare,
appeering by his acts.

And what ? shall I to ground let fall
my fathers golden praise ?

No, no ; I meane for to attempt
this fame more large to raise,

In that that I, his sonne, succeed
his kingly seat as due :

Extend your counsell unto me
in that I aske of you.

I am the king of *Persea*,
a large and fertil soil :

The *Egyptians* against us repunge,
as verlets slave and vile ;

Therefore I meane with *Marfis* hart,
with warres them to frequent,

Them to subdue as captives mine,
this is my harts intent :

So shall I win honours delight,
and praise of me shall go. —

My *Counsell*, speak ; and, lordings eke,
is it not best doo so ?

Counsell.

Oh pusant king, your blisful words
deserves abundant praise,

That you in this do go about,
your fathers fame to raise.

Oh blisful day, that king so yung
such profit should conceive ;

His fathers praise and his to win,
from those that would deceive.

Sure, my true and soverain king,
I fall before you prest,

Answer to give as duty mine,
in that your grace request.

If

If that your hart adicted be,
 the *Egyptians* to convince,
 Through *Marfis* aid the conquest wun,
 then deed of happy prince
 Shall pearce the skyes unto the throne
 of the supernall seat,
 And merit there a just rewarde
 of *Jupiter* the great.
 But then your grace must not turn back
 from this pretenced wil,
 For to proceed in vertuous life,
 imploie indeavour stil;
 Extinguish vice, and in that cup
 to drink have no delight:
 To martiall feats, and kingly sporte,
 fix all your whole delight.

King.

My *Councel* grave, a thousand thanks
 with hart I doo you render,
 That you my case so prosperouse,
 intierly doo tender:
 I wil not swarve from those your steps,
 wherto you wold me train. —
 But now, my lord, and valiant knight,
 with woords give answer plain;
 Are you content with me to go,
 the *Marfis* games to try?

Lord.

Yea, peerlesse prince, to aid your grace,
 my self wil live and dye.

Knights.

And I for my habilitie,
 for feare wil not turn back;
 But as the ship against the rocks,
 sustain and bide the wrack.

King.

King.

Oh willing harts, a thousand thanks

I render unto you :

Strik up your drummes with courage great ;
we will march soorth even now.

Councel.

Permit (o king) few woords to heer,
my duty serves no lesse ;

Therefore give leave to *Councel* thine,
his minde for to expresse.

King.

Speake on, my *Councel*, what is he,
you shall have favour mine.

Councel.

Then wil I speake unto your grace,
as duty dooth me binde :

Your grace dooth meane for to attempt
of war the manly art ;

Your grace therin may hap receive
with others for your parte

The dent of death, in those affaires
all persons are alike :

The hart couragious often times
his detriment doth seek ;

Its best therefore for to permit,
a ruler of your land,

To fit and judge with equitie,
when things of right are scand.

King.

My grace dooth yeeld to this your talk,
to be thus now it shall :

My knight, therefore prepare your self,
Sisammes for to call :

A judge he is of prudent skil,
even he shall bear the sway,

In absence mine when from the land
I doo departe my way.

Knight

Knight.

Your knight before your grace even heere
him self hath redy prest,
With willing hart for to fulfil
as your grace made request.

[*Exit.*

Counsell.

Pleaseth your grace, I judge of him
to be a man right fit;
For he is learned in the law,
having the gift of wit:
In your graces presinct I doo not view
for it a meeter man;
His learning is of good effect,
bring proof therof I can.
I doo not knowe what is his life
his conscience hid from me,
I dout not but the feare of God
before his eyes to be.

Lord.

Reporte declares, he is a man
that to him self is nye;
One that favoureth much the world,
and to much sets therby:
But this I say of certaintie,
if he your grace succeed,
In your absence but for a while,
he wil be warnd indeed;
No injustice for to frequent,
no partiall judge to proove,
But rule all things with equitie,
to win your graces loove.

King.

Of that he shall a warning have
my heafts for to obay;
Great punishment for his offence
against him wil I lay.

Counsell.

Council.

Beholde, I see him now agreffe,
and enter into place.

Sifamnes.

Oh puissant prince, and mightie king,
the gods preserve your grace!
Your graces message came to me,
Your wil purporting foorth:
With grateful minde I it received,
according to mine othe,
Erecting then my self with speed,
before your graces eyes,
The tenor of your princely wil,
from you for to agnise.

King.

Sifamnes, this the whole effect,
the which for you I sent,
Our minde it is to elevate,
you to great preferment.
My grace, and gracious *Council* eke,
hath chose you for this cause:
In judgment you doo office beare,
which have the skil in lawes;
We think that you accordingly,
by justice rule will deale,
That for offence none shall have cause
(of wrong) you to appeale.

Sifamnes.

Abundant thanks unto your grace
for this benigntie:
To you his *Council* in like case,
with lords of clemency.
What so your grace to me permits,
if I therin offend,
Such execution then commence,
and use it to this end.

That

That all other (by that my deed)
example so may take:
To admonish them to flee the same
by fear it may them make.

King.

Then according to your woordes,
if you therin offend,
I assure you even from my breast
correction shall extend.
From *Percia* I meane to go
into the *Egipt* land,
Them to convince by force of armes,
and win the upper hand.
While I therfore absent shalbe,
I doo you full permit,
As governour in this my right,
in that estate to sit,
For to detect, and eke correct,
those that abuse my grace:
This is the totall of my wil;
give answer in this case.

Silannes.

Unworthy much (o prince) am I,
and for this gift unfit;
But sith that it hath pleasd your grace,
that I in it must sit,
I doo avouch unto my death,
according to my skill,
With equitie for to observe
your graces minde and wil;
And nought from it to swerve indeed,
but sincerely to stay:
Els let me taste the penaltie,
as I before did say.

King.

Wel then of this authoritie
I give you full possession.

Sisammes.

And I wil it fulfil also,
as I have made profession.

King.

My *Council* then, let us departe,
a small stay to make :
To *Egipt* land now forth with speed,
my voiage I wil take.
Strike up your drummes us to rejoyce;
to hear the warlike found :
Stay you heer, *Sisammes*, judge,
and looke wel to your bound.

[*Exeunt King, Lord and Councel.*

Sisammes.

Even now the king hath me extolde,
and set me up aloft ;
Now may I were the brodered garde,
and lye in down bed soft ;
Now may I purchase house and land,
and have all at my wil ;
Now may I build a princely place,
my minde for to fulfil ;
Now may I abrogate the law,
as I shall think it good ;
If any one me now offend,
I may demaund his blood.
According to the proverb olde,
my mouth I wil up make ;
Now it dooth lye all in my hand,
to leave or els to take ;
To deale with justice to my bound,
and so to live in hope ;
But oftentimes the birds be gone,
while one for nest dooth grope.
Deo well or il, I dare avouch,
some evil on me wil speake :

No

No truly yet I doo not meane,
 the kinges precepts to breake;
 To place I meane for to return
 my duty to fulfil.

[Exit.

*Enter the Vice with an olde capcase on his bed, an olde
 pail about his hips for barnes, a scummer and a pottid
 by his side, and a rake on his shoulder.*

Ambidexter.

Stand away, stand away, for the passion of God;
 Harnessed I am prepared to the feeld:
 I would have been content at home to have bod,
 But I am sent foorth with my speare and sheeld.
 I am appointed to fight against a snail,
 And *Wilkin Wren* the ancient shall beare;
 I dout not but against him to prevail,
 To be a man my deeds shall declare.
 If I overcome him, then a butter flye takes his parte,
 His weapon must be a blew speckled hen:
 But you shall see me overthrow him with a fart,
 So without conquest he shall go home again.
 If I overcome him, I must fight with a flye,
 And a black pudding the flyes weapon must be:
 At the first blowe on the ground he shall lye,
 I wil be sure to thrust him through the mouth to the
 knee.
 To conquest these fellowes the man I wil play,*
 Ha, ha, ha, now ye wil make me to smile,
 To see if I can all men begile.
 Ha, my name, my name would you so fain knowe?
 Yea, iwis, shall ye, and that with all speed:
 I have forgot it, therefore I cannot showe;
 A, a, now I have it, I have it in deed.

* Here is evidently a line omitted, which it is impossible to supply by conjecture.

My name is *Ambidexter*, I signifie one,
 That with bothe hands finely can play;
 Now with king *Cambices*, and by and by comes
 Thus doo I run this and that way.
 For while I meane with a souldier to be,
 Then give I a leape to *Sisamnes* the iudge;
 I dare avouch, ye shall his destruction see:
 To all kinde of estates I meane for to trudge.
Ambidexter, nay he is a fellow if ye knew all:
 Seasse for a while, heerafter hear more ye shall.

Enter three Ruffians, Huf, Ruf, and Snuf, singing.

Huf.

Gogs flesh and his wounds, these warres reioice my hart;
 By his wounds, I hope to doo wel for my parte:
 By Gogs hart, the world shall go evil if I do not shift;
 At some olde carles bouget I mean for to lift.

Ruf.

By his flesh, nose, eyes, and ears,
 I wil venter void of all cares:
 He is not a souldier that dooth feare any dout;
 If that he would bring his purpose about.

Snuf.

Feare that feare list, it shall not be I:
 Gy Gogs wounds, I wil make some neck stand awry;
 If I lose my share, I sweare by Goga hart,
 Then let an other take up my parte.

Huf.

Yet I hope to come the richest souldier away.

Ruf.

If a man ask ye, ye mayhap to say nay.

Snuf.

Let all men get what they can, not to leese I hope:
 Where soever I go in eche corner I wil grope.

Ambidexter.

What, and ye run into the corner of some prety maid?

Snuf.

To grope there, good fellow, I wil not be afraid.

Huf.

Huf.

Gogs wounds, what art thou that with us doost mel?
Thou seemest to be a souldier, the trueth to tel;
Thou seemest to be harnesssed, I cannot tel how:
I think, he came lately from riding some tow;
Such a deformed slave did I never see:
Ruf. doost thou knowe him? I pray thee, tel mee.

Ruf.

No, by my troth, fellow *Huf*, I never see him before.

Snaf.

As for me I care not if I never see him more.
Come, let us run his arse against the poste.

Ambidexter.

A, ye slaves, I wil be with you at the oste:
A, ye knaves, I wil teach ye how ye shal me deride.
[*Here let him swinge them about.*

Out of my fight; I can ye not abide.
Now, Goodman pouchmouth, I am a slave with you;
Now have at ye a fresh again even now:
Mine arse against the poste you wil run;
But I wil make ye from that saying to turn.

Huf.

I beseech ye hertely, to be content.

Ruf.

I insure you, by mine honesty no hurt we ment:
Beside that again we deo not knowe what ye are;
Ye knowe, that souldiers their stoutnes wil declare.
Therefore, if we have any thing offended.
Pardon our rudenes, and it shalbe amended.

Ambidexter.

Yea, Gods pitie, begin ye to intreate me?
Have at ye once again; by the masse, I wil beat ye.
[*Fight again.*

Huf.

Gogs hart, let us kil him; suffer no longer.

[*Draw their swords.*

Snaf.

Thou slave, we wil see if thou be the stronger.

R 3

Ruf.

Ruf.

Strike of his hed at one blow :
That we be souldiers, Gogs hart, let him knowe.

Ambidexter.

O the passion of God, I have doon by mine honesty :
I wil take your parte heerafter verily,

All.

Then content, let us agree.

Ambidexter.

Shake hands with me, I shake hands with thee :
Ye are ful of curtesye, that is the best ;
And you take great pain, ye are a mannerly gest.
Why, maisters, doo you not knowe me ? the trueth to me
tel.

All.

No, trust us, not very wel.

Ambidexter.

Why, I am *Ambidexter*, who many souldiers do love.

Huf.

Gogs hart, to have thy company needs we must proove.
We must play with bothe hands with our hostes and host,
Play with bothe hands, and score on the poste,
Now and then with our captain for many a delay,
We wil not stick with bothe hands to play.

Ambidexter.

The honestest man ye, ye may me trust.

Enter Meretrix, with a staff on her shoulder.

Meretrix.

What, is there no lads heer that hath a lust,
To have a passing trul to help at their need ?

Huf.

Gogs hart, she is come indeed.
What, mistres *Meretrix* ? by his wounds, welcome to me.

Meretrix.

What wil ye give me ? I pray you, let me see.

Ruf.

By his hart, she lookes for gifts by and by.

Meretrix.

Meretrix.

What, maister *Ruf*? I cry you mercy;
The last time I was with you I got a broken hed,
And lay in the street all night for want of a bed.

Sauf.

Gogs wounds, kisse me, my trul so white,
In thee I sweare is all my delight;
If thou shouldest have had a broken hed for my sake,
I would have made his hed to ake.

Meretrix.

What, maister *Ambidexter*? who looked for you?

Ambidexter.

Mistres *Meretrix*, I thought not to see you heer now.
There is no remedy, at meeting I must have a kisse.

Meretrix.

What, man? I wil not stick for that, by *Giffe*. [*Kisse*.

Ambidexter.

So, now gramercy, I pray thee, be gone.

Meretrix.

Nay, soft, my friend; I meane to have one:
Nay, soft; I swere, and if ye were my brother,
Before I let go I wil have another. [*Kisse, kisse, kisse*.

Ruf.

Gogs hart, the whore would not kisse me yet.

Meretrix.

If I be a whore, thou art a knave, then it is quit.

Huf.

But hearst thou, *Meretrix*? with who this night wilt
thou lye?

Meretrix.

With him that giveth the most money.

Huf.

Gogs hart, I have no money in purse, ne yet in clout.

Meretrix.

Then get thee hence, and pack like a lout.

Huf.

Adieu, like a whore.

Exit Huf.

Meretrix.

Meretrix.

Farewel, like a knave.

Ruf.

Gogs nailes, mistres *Meretrix*, now he is gone,
 A match ye shall make straight with me;
 I wil give thee sixpence to lye one night with thee.

Meretrix.

Gogs heart, flave, doost thou think I am a fixpenny
 jug?

No; wis ye, *Jack*, I look a little more smug.

Sauf.

I wil give her xvijj pence to serve me first.

Meretrix.

Gramercy, *Sauf*, thou art not the wurst.

Ruf.

By Gogs hart, she were better be hanged, to forsake
 me and take thee.

Sauf.

Were she so? that shall we se.

Ruf.

By Gogs hart, my dagger into her I wil thrust.

Sauf.

A, ye boy, ye would do it and ye durst.

Ambidexter.

Peace, my maisters; ye shall not fight:
 He that draws first I wil him smite.

Ruf.

Gogs wounds, maister *Sauf*, are ye so lusty?

Sauf.

Gogs sides, maister *Ruf*, are ye so crusty?

Ruf.

You may happen to see.

Sauf.

Doo what thou darest to me.

[*Here draw and fight. Here she must lay on and
 coyle them both, the Vice must run his way
 for feare, Sauf sing down his sword and
 buckler, and run his way.*]

Meretrix.

Meretrix.

Gogs sides, knaves, seeing to fight ye be so rough,
Defend your selves, for I will give ye bothe inough:
I will teach ye how ye shall fall out for me;
Yea, thou slave *Ruf*, no more blowes wilt thou bide?
To take thy heels a time haste thou spied?
Thou villain, seeing *Ruf* is gone away,
A little better I meane thee to pay.

*[He falleth down, she falleth upon him, and beat
him, and taketh away his weapon.]*

Ruf.

Alas, good mistres *Meretrix*, no more;
My legs, sides, and armes, with beating be fore.

Meretrix.

Thou a souldier, and loose thy weapon!
Go hence, fir boy; say, a woman hath thee beaten.

Ruf.

Good mistres *Meretrix*, my weapon let me have;
Take pitie on me mine honestie to save:
If it be knowen this repulse I sustain,
It wil redound to my ignomy and shame.

Meretrix.

If thou wilt be my man, and wait upon me,
This swoord and buckler I will give thee.

Ruf.

I will doo all at your commaundement;
As seruaunt to you I wil be obedient.

Meretrix.

Then let me see how before me ye can go:
When I spake to you ye shall do so;
Of with your cap at place and at boord:
Forsooth, mistres *Meretrix*, at every word.
Tut, tut; in the camp such souldiers there be;
One good woman would beat away two or three.
Wel, I am sure, customers tary at home:
Manerly before; and let us be gone.

[Exeunt.]

Enter

Enter Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

O the passion of God, be they heere fill or no?
I durst not abide to see her beat them so.
I may say to you I was in such a fright:
Body of me, I see the heare of my bed stand upright.
When I saw her so hard upon them lay on,
O the passion of God, thought I, she wil be with me anon.

I made no more a doo but avoided the thrust,
And to my leggs began for to trust;
And fel a laughing to my self, when I was once gone:
It is wisdom (quoth I) by the masse to save one.
Then into this place I intended to trudge,
Thinking to meet *Sisamnes* the judge.
Beholde where he commeth I wil him meet;
And, like a gentleman, I meane him to greet.

Enter Sisamnes.

Sisamnes.

Since that the kings graces majestie in office did me set,
What abundance of welth to me might I get?
Now and then some vantage I atchieve,
much more yet may I take;
But that I fear, unto the king
that some complaint wil make.

Ambidexter.

Jesu, maister *Sisamnes*, you are unwise.

Sisamnes.

Why so? I pray ye, let me agnise.
What, maister *Ambidexter*, is it you?
Now welcome to me, I make God a vow.

Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

Jesu, maister, *Sisamnes*, with me you are wel acquainted;
 By me rulers may be trimly painted.
 Ye are unwise, if ye take not time while ye may :
 If ye wil not now, when ye would ye shall have nay.
 What is he, that of you dare make exclamation,
 Of your wrong dealing to make explication ?
 Can you not play with bothe hands, and turn with the
 winde ?

Sisamnes.

Believe me, your woords draw deep in my minde.
 In colloure wise unto this day
 to bribes I have inclyned :
 More the same for to frequent
 of trueth I am now minded.
 Behold, even now unto me suters doo proceed.

Small Habilitie.

I beseech you heer, good maister judge,
 a poor mans cause to tender ;
 Condemne me not in wrongful wise,
 that never was offender.
 You knowe right wel, my right it is,
 I have not for to give ;
 You take away from me my due,
 that should my corps releve.
 The *Commons* of you doo complain,
 from them you devocate ;
 With anguish great, and greivous words,
 ther hearts doo penetrate.
 The right you sel unto the wrong,
 your private gain to win ;
 You violate the simple man,
 and count it for no sin.

Sisamnes.

Holde thy tung, thou pratling knave,
 and give to me reward ;
 Els in this wise, I tel thee trueth,
 thy tale wil not be heard.

Ambidexter,

270 A COMMEDY OF

Ambidexter, let us go hence, and let the knave alone.

Ambidexter.

Farewel, *Small Hab litie*, for helpe now get ye none.

Bribes hath corrupt him, good lawes to pollute.

[*Exeunt*.

Small Habilitie.

A naughtie man that wil not obsy the kings constitute.

With hevy hart I wil return,

til God redresse my pain.

[*Exit*.

Enter Shame, with a trump black.

Shame.

From among the grisly gotts I come,

from tirants telly train;

Unseemly *Shame*, of sooth I am

procured to make plain

The odious facts and shamelesse deeds

that *Cambises* king dooth use;

All pietie, and vertuouse life,

he dooth it clene refuse.

Lechery and drunkennes,

he dooth it much frequent;

The tigers kinde to immitate,

he hath given ful consent.

He nought esteemes his *Councel* grave,

ne vertuouse bringing up;

But dayly stil receives the drink

of damned vices cup:

He can bide no instruction,

he takes so great delight,

In working of iniquitie,

for to frequent his spight:

As fame dooth sound the royall trump

of worthy men and trim,

So shame dooth blowe with strained blast

the trump of shame on him.

[*Exit*.

Enter

Enter the King, Lord, Praxaspes, and Sisamnes.

King.

My judge, since my departure hence,
have you used judgement right?
If faithful stuard I ye finde,
the same I will requite.

Sisamnes.

No dout, your grace shall not once hear,
that I have doon amis.

Praxaspes.

I much rejoyce to heare so good news as this.

*Enter Commons Cry, running in speak this verse,
go out again hastily.*

Commons Cry.

Alas, alas! how are the Commons oppressed
by that vile judge, *Sisamnes* by name?
I doo not knowe, how it should be redressed;
to amend the life no whit he dooth frame.
We are undoon, and thrown out of doore,
his damnable dealing dooth us so torment:
At his hand we can finde no releaf nor succoure.
God graunt him grace for to repent!

[Run away crying.]

King.

What doleful cryes be these, my lord,
that sound doo in mine eare?
Intelligence if you can give,
unto your king declare.
To me it seemeth my Commons all
they doo lament and cry
Out of *Sisamnes* judge moste cheef,
even now standing us by.

Praxaspes.

Even so (o king) it seemd to me
as you rehearfall made:

I dout

I dout the judge culpable be
in some respect or trade,

Sisammes.

Redouted king, have no mistrust,
no whit your minde dismay;
There is not one that can me charge,
or ought against me lay.

Enter Commons Complaint, with Proof, and Triall.

Commons Complaint.

Commons Complaint I represent,
with thrall of dolful state,
By urgent cause erected foorth
my grief for to dilate.
Unto the king I wil prepare
my misery to tel,
To have releef of this my greef,
and fettered feet so fel.
Rodouted prince, and mightie king,
my self I prostrate heer;
Vouchsafe (o king) with me to beare
for this that I appeer.
With humble sute I pardon crave
of your moſte royall grace,
To give me leave my minde to breke,
before you in this place.

King.

Commons Complaint, keep nothing back,
fear not thy tale to tel:
What ere he be within this land,
that hath not used thee wel,
As princes mouth shall sentence give,
he shall receive the same;
Unfolde the secrets of thy brest,
for I extinguiſh blame.

Commons Compla

Commons Complaint.

God preserve your royall grace,
 and send you blisful dayes,
 That all your deeds might stil accord
 to give the God the praise.
 My complaint is (o mightie king)
 against that judge you by;
 Whose careless deeds, gain to receive,
 hath made the *Commons* cry:
 He, by taking bribes and gifts,
 the poore he dooth oppresse,
 Taking releef from infants yung,
 widowes and fatherlesse.

King.

Untrustful traitor, and corrupt judge,
 how likest thou this complaint?
 Forewarning I to thee did give,
 of this to make restraint:
 And hast thou done this divelish deed,
 mine ire for to augment?
 I sentence give, thou *Judas* judge;
 thou shalt thy deed repent.

Sisannes.

O pusant prince, it is not so,
 his complaint I deny.

Commons Complaint.

If it be not so (most mightie king)
 in place then let me dye:
 Beholde that I have brought with me,
 bothe *Proof* and *Tryall* true,
 To stand even heer, and sentence give,
 what by him did insue.

Proof.

I, *Proof*, doo him in this appeal,
 he did the *Commons* wrong;
 Unjustly he with them hath delt,
 his greedy was so strong:

His hart did covet in to get,
 he cared not which way ;
 The poor did leese their due and right,
 because they want to pay
 Unto him for bribes indeed,
 this was his wanted use :
 Wheras your grace good lawes did make,
 he did the same abuse.

Tryall.

I, *Tryall*, heer to verify
 what *Proof* dooth now unfold,
 To stand against him in his wrong,
 as now I dare be bolde.

King.

How likest thou this, thou captive vile ?
 canst thou the same deny ?

Sisammes.

O noble king, forgive my fact,
 I yeeld to thy mercy.

King.

Complaint, and *Proof*, redresse will I
 all this your misery :
 Departe with speed from whence you came,
 and straight commaund by me
 The execution man to come
 before my grace with haste.

All.

For to fulfil this your request,
 no time we meane to waste. *[Exeunt they three.]*

King.

My lord, before my grace go call
 Otian this judges sonne ;
 And he shall heare, and also see,
 what his father hath doon.
 The father he shall suffer death,
 the sonne his rounge succeed ;
 And if that he no better prove,
 so likewise shall he speed.

Praxaspos.

Praxaspes.

As your grace hath commaundment given,
 I meane for to fulfil. [*Step aside and fetch him.*]

King.

Accursed judge, couldst thou consent
 to do this cursed il?

According unto thy demaund,
 thou shalt for this thy guilt
 Receive thy death before mine eyes,
 thy blood it shalbe spilt.

Praxaspes.

Beholde (o king) *Sisannes* sonne,
 before you dooth appeere.

King.

Otian, this is my minde,
 therfore to me come neer:
 Thy father heer for judgment wrong
 procured hath his death,
 And thou his sonne shalt him succeed,
 when he hath lost his breth;
 And if that thou doost once offend,
 as thou seest thy father have,
 In likewise thou shalt suffer death,
 no mercy shall thee save.

Otian

O mightie king, vouchsafe your grace,
 my father to remit;
 Forgive his fault, his pardon I
 doo aske of you as yet.
 Alas, although my father hath
 your princely hart offended,
 Amends for misse he wil now make,
 and faults shalbe amended.
 In sted of his requested life,
 pleaseth your grace take mine:
 This offer I as tender childe,
 so duty dooth me binde.

King.

Doo not intreat my grace no more,
 for he shall dye the death;
 Where is the execution man,
 him to bereave of breath?

*Enter Execution.**Execution.*

At hand, and if it like your grace,
 my duty to dispatch;
 In hope that I, when deed is doon,
 a good rewarde shall catch.

King.

Dispatch with swoord this judges life,
 extinguisht fear and cares;
 So doon, draw thou his cursed skin,
 strait over both his cares.
 I wil see the office doon,
 and that before mine eyes.

Execution.

To doo the thing my king commaunds,
 I give the enterprife.

Sisannes.

Otian, my sonne, the king to death
 by law hath me condemned;
 And you in roume and office mine,
 his graces wil hath placed:
 Use justice therfore in this case,
 and yeeld unto no wrong.
 Lest thou doo purchase the like death,
 or ever it be long.

Otian.

O father deer, these words to hear,
 that you must dye by force,
 Bedewes my cheeks with stilled teares;
 the king hath no remorse.

The greivous grief and strained fighes,
 my hart doth breake in twain;
 And I deplore, moſte woful childe,
 that I ſhould ſee you ſlain.

O false, and fickle, frowning dame,
 that turneth as the winde,

Is this the joy in fathers age,
 thou me assignest to ſhade?

O dole ful day, unhappy houre,
 that looving childe ſhould ſee:

His father deer before his face,
 thus put to death ſhould bee.

Yet, father, give me bleſſing thine,
 and let me once embrace

Thy comely corps in ſoulded armes,
 and kiſſe thy ancient face.

Sisamnes.

O childe thou makes mine eyes to run,
 as rivers doo by ſtreame;

My leave I take of thee my ſonne,
 beware of this my beame.

King.

Diſpatch even now, thou man of death,
 no longer ſeeme to ſtay.

Execution.

Come M. *Sisamnes*, come on your way,
 my office I muſt pay;

Forgive therefore my deed.

Sisamnes.

I doo forgive it thee, my freend;
 diſpatch therefore with ſpeed:

*[Smite him in the neck with a ſword to ſignify
 his death.]*

Praxaspes.

Beholde (o king) how he dooth bleed,
 beeing of life bereft.

King.

In this wife he shall not yet be left.
 Pul his skin over his cares,
 to make his death more vile:
 A wretch he was, a cruel thief,
 my *Commons* to begile.

*[Flea him with a false skin.]**Otian.*

What childe is he of natures mould
 could bide the same to see,
 His father fled in this wife?
 Oh how it greeveth me!

King.

Otian, thou see'st thy father dead,
 and thou art in his rounge:
 If thou beest proud as he hath been,
 even therto shalt thou come.

Otian.

O king, to me this is a glasse,
 with grief in it I view
 Example that unto your grace
 I doo not prove untrue.

Praxaspes.

Otian, convey your father hence.
 to tomb where he shall lye.

Otian.

And if it please your lordship,
 it shalbe doon by and by.
 Good execution man for need,
 help me with him away.

Execution.

I wil fulfil, as you to me did say. *[They take him away.]*

King.

My lord, now that my grace hath seen,
 that finish is this deed,
 To question mine give tentative care,
 and answere make with speed.

Have

Have not I doon a gratiuous deed,
to redresse my *Commons* wo?

Praxaspes.

Yea, truely, if it please your grace,
ye have in deed doon so:

But now (o king) in freendly wife,
I councel you in this;

Certain vices for to leave,
that in you placed is:

The vife of drunkennes (o king)
which dooth you fore infect,

With other great abuses, which
I wish you to detest.

King.

Peace, my lord; what needeth this?
of this I wil not hear:

To pallaice now I wil return,
and there to make good cheer.

God *Baccus* he bestowes his gifts,
we have good store of wine;

And also that the ladyes be,
both passing brave and fine:

But, stay; I see a lord now come,
and eke a valiant knight.

What newes, my lord? to see you heer,
my hart it dooth delight.

Enter Lord, and Knight to meet the King.

Lord.

No newes, (o king) but of duty come,
to wait upon your grace.

King.

I thank you, my lord, and looving knight,
I pray you, with me trace.

My lords, and knight, I pray ye tel,
I wil not be offended:

Am I worthy of any crime
once to be reprehended?

Praxaspes.

The *Persians* much praise your grace,
but one thing discommend,

In that to wine subject you be,
wherin you doo offend.

Sith that the might of wines effect,
dooth oft subdue your brain,

My counsel is to please their harts,
from it you would refrain.

Lord.

No, no, my lord, it is not so;
for this of prince they tel,

For vertuous proof, and princely facts,
Cirus he dooth excel;

By that his grace by conquest great
the *Egyptians* did convince;

Of him reporte abroad dooth passe,
to be a worthy prince.

Knigbt.

In person of *Cresus* I answer make,
we may not his grace compare,

In whole respect for to be like,
Cirus the kings father:

In so much your grace hath yet no childe,
as *Cirus* left behinde,

Even you I meane, *Cambises* king,
in whome I favour finde.

King.

Cresus said wel in saying so:

but, *Praxaspes*, tel me why,

That to my mouth in such a sort,
thou should avouch a lye,

Of drunkennes me thus to charge:
but thou with speed shalt see,

Whether that I a sober king,
or els a drunkard bee.

I knowe

I knowe thou hast a blisful babe,
 wherin thou doost delight :
 Me to revenge of these thy words,
 I wil go wreke this spight.
 When I the moste have tasted wine,
 my bowe it shalbe bent,
 At hart of him even then to shoot,
 is now my whole intent :
 And if that I his hart can hit,
 the king no drunkard is ;
 If hart of his I doo not kil,
 I yeeld to thee in this.
 Therefore, *Praxaspes*, fetch to me
 thy yungest sonne with speed ;
 There is no way, I tel thee plain,
 but I wil doo this deed.

Praxaspes.

Redouted prince, spare my sweet childe,
 he is mine only joy :
 I trust, your grace to infants hart
 no such thing wil imploy.
 If that his mother hear of this,
 she is so nigh her flight,
 In clay her corps wil soon be shrinde,
 to passe from worlds delight.

King.

No more adoo, go fetch me him,
 it shalbe as I say :
 And if that I doo speak the woord,
 how dare ye once say nay ?

Praxaspes.

I wil go fetch him to your grace,
 but so, I trust, it shall not be.

King.

For feare of my displeasure great,
 go fetch him unto me.

Is he gone? Now, by the Gods,

I wil doo as I say:

My lord, therfore fil me some wine,

I hartely you pray;

For I must drink to make my brain
somewhat intoxicate:

When that the wine is in my hed,
oh, trimly I can prate.

Lord.

Heere is the cup with filled wine,
therof to take repaste.

King.

Give it me to drink it of,
and see no wine be waste:

[*Drink.*

Once again in large this cup;
for I must taste it stil:

[*Drink.*

By the gods, I think, of pleasant wine
I cannot take my fil.

Now drink is in, give me my bowe,
and arrowes from fir knight;

At hart of child I meane to shoot,
hoping to cleve it right.

Knight.

Beholde (o king) wher he dooth come,
his infant yung in hand.

Praxaspes.

O mightie king your grace behest,
with sorow I have scand,

And brought my childe fro mothers knee,
before you to appeer:

And she therof no whit dooth knowe,
that he in place is heer.

King.

Set him up my mark to be,
I wil shoot at his hart.

Praxaspes.

I beseech your grace not so to doo,
set this pretence a parte.

Farewel,

Farewel, my deer and looving babe;

 come kisse thy father deer:

A greevous fight to me it is,

 to see thee slain even heer.

Is this the gain now from the king

 for giving councel good,

Before my face with such despite

 to spil my sonnes hart blood?

O hevy day to me this is,

 and mother in like case.

Yung Cbilde.

O father, father, wipe your face,

 I see the teares run from your eye:

My mother is at home fowing of a band;

 alas, deer father, why doo you cry?

King.

Before me as mark now let him stand;

 I wil shoot at him my minde to fulfil.

Yung Cbilde.

Alas, alas! father, wil you me kil?

Good master king, doo not shoot at me,

 my mother loves me best of all.

King.

I have dispatched him, down he dooth fall; [*Shoot.*

As right as a line his hart I have hit:

Nay thou shalt see, *Praxaspes*, straunger newes yet.

My knight with speed his hart cut out,

 and give it unto me.

Knight.

It shalbe doon (o mightie king)

 with all seleritie.

Lord.

My lord *Praxaspes*, this had not been,

 but your tung must be walking,

To the king of correction

 you must needs be talking.

Praxaspes.

Praxaspes.

No correction (my lord) but counsel for the best.

Knight.

Heere is the hart, according to your graces behest.

King.

Beholde, *Praxaspes*, thy sonnes own hart:

oh, how wel the same was hit!

After this wine to doo this deed,

I thought it very fit:

Esteeme thou maist right wel therby,

no drunkard is the king,

That in the midit of all his cups,

could doo this valiant thing.

My lord, and knight, on me attend;

to pallasce we will go,

And leave him heer to take his sonne,

when we are gone him fra.

All.

With all our harts we give consent

to wait upon your grace.

Praxaspes.

A woful man (o lord) am I,

to see him in this case:

My dayes I deem deserts their end,

this deed wil help me hence,

To have the bloffoms of my feeld

destroyd by violence.

*Enter Mother.**Mother.*

Alas, alas! I doo heare tel,

the king hath kild my sonne:

If it be so, wo worth the deed,

that ever it was doon.

It is even so, my lord I see,

how by him he dooth weep:

Wha

KING CAMBISES.

283

What ment I that from hands of him,
 this childe I did not keep?
 Alas! husband and lord, what did you meante
 to fetch this child away?

Praxaspes.

O lady wife, I little thought
 for to have seen this day.

Mother.

O blisful babe, o joy of womb,
 harts comfort and delight,
 For councel given unto the king,
 is this thy just requite?
 O hevy day, and doleful time,
 these mourning-tunes to make!
 With blubred eyes into mine armes
 from earth I wil thee take,
 And wrap thee in mine apron white:
 but oh! my hevy hart!
 The spightful pangs that it sustains,
 would make it in two to part:
 The death of this my sonne to see,
 O hevy mother now,
 That from thy sweet and sugred joy,
 to sorow so shouldst bow.
 What grief in womb did I retain,
 before I did thee see?
 Yet, at the last, when smart was gone,
 what joy wert thou to me?
 How tender was I of thy food
 for to preserve thy state?
 How filled I thy tender hart
 at times carely and late?
 With velvet paps I gave thee suck,
 with issue from my brest,
 And daunced thee upon my knee
 to bring thee unto rest.

Is this the joy of thee I reap
 (o king) of tigers brood ?
 Oh, tigers whelp, hadst thou the hart,
 to see this childe's hart blood ?
 Nature inforceth me, alas !
 in this wise to deplore ;
 To wring my hands, o wele away,
 that I should see this houre !
 Thy mother yet will kisse thy lips,
 filk soft and pleasant white ;
 With wringing hands lamenting for
 to see thee in this plight.
 My lording deer, let us go home,
 our mourning to augment.

Praxapes.

My lady deer, with hevy hart
 to it I doo consent ;
 Between us bothe the childe to bere
 unto our lordly place.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

In deed, as ye say, I have been absent a long space :
 But is not my cosin *Cutpurse* with you in the mene time ?
 To it, to it, *Cosin* ; and doo your office fine.
 How like you *Sisammes* for using of me ?
 He plaid with bothe hands, but he sped il favouredly.
 The king him self was godly up trained ;
 He professed virtue, but I think it was fained :
 He playes with bothe hands good deeds and ill ;
 But it was no good deed, *Praxapes* sonne for to kil !
 As he for the good deed on the judge was commended,
 For all his deeds els he is reprehended.
 The moste evil disposed person, that ever was ;
 All the state of his life he would not let passe.

Some

Some good deeds he wil doo, though they be but few:
 The like things this tirant *Cambices* dooth shew.
 No goodnes from him to none is exhibited;
 But stil malediction abroad is distributed.
 And yet ye shall see in the rest of his race,
 What infamy he wil woork against his owne grace.
 Whist, no more woords: heer comes the kings brother.

Enter lord Smirdis, with Attendance and Diligence.

Smirdis.

The kings brother by birth am I,
 issued from *Cyrus* loynes:
 A greef to me it is to hear
 of this the kings repines.
 I like not wel of those his deeds,
 that he dooth stil frequent;
 I wish to God, that other waies
 his minde he could content:
 Yung I am, and next to him,
 no mo of us there be;
 I would be glad a quiet realme
 in this his reign to se.

Attendance.

My lord, your good and willing hart
 the gods wil recompence,
 In that your minde so pensife is,
 for those his great offence.
 My lord his grace shall have a time
 to pair and to amende:
 Happy is he that can escape,
 and not his grace offend.

Diligence.

If that wicked vice he could refrain,
 from wasting wine forbere,
 A moderate life he would frequent,
 amending this his square.

Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

My lord, and if your honor it shall please,
I can informe you what is best for your ease;
Let him alone, of his deeds do not talke,
Then by his side ye may quietly walke;
After his death you shalbe king,
Then may you reforme eche kinde of thing.
In the meane time live quietly, doo not with him
deale;
So shall it redownd much to your weale.

Smirdis.

Thou saist true, my friend, that is the best:
I knowe not whether he loove me, or doo me detest.

Attendance.

Learne from his company all that you may;
I faithful *Attendance* wil your honor obey.
If against your honor he take any ire,
His grace is as like to kindle his fire,
To your honors destruction as otherwise.

Diligence.

Therefore, my lord, take good advise,
And I *Diligence* your case wil so tender,
That to his grace your honor shalbe none offender.

Smirdis.

I thank you bothe, intire freends, with my honor til
remain.

Ambidexter.

Beholde, where the king dooth come with his train.

Enter King, and 1 Lord.

King.

O lording deer, and brother mine,
I joy your state to see;
Surmising much what is the cause,
you absent thus from mee.

Smirdis.

Smirdis.

Pleaseth your grace, no offence I,
 but redy to fulfil,
 At all assayes, my prince, and king,
 in that your grace me wil:
 What I can doo in true defence,
 to you, my prince, aright,
 In redynes I alwaies am
 to offer foorth my might.

King.

And I the like to you again
 doo heer avouch the same.

All.

For this your good agreement heer,
 now praised be Gods name.

Ambidexter.

But hear ye, noble prince; hark in your eare:
 It is best to doo as I did declare.

King.

My lord and brother *Smirdis* now,
 this is my minde and wil,
 That you to court of mine return,
 and there to tary stil,
 Til my return within short space
 your honor for to greet.

Smirdis.

At your behest so wil I doo,
 til time again we meet:
 My leave I take from you (o king)
 even now I doo departe.

[*Exeunt Smirdis, Attendance, and Diligence.*]*King.*

Farewel, lord and brother mine,
 farewel with all my hart.
 My lord, my brother *Smirdis* is
 of youth and manly might;
 And in his sweet and pleasant face
 my hart dooth take delight.

Lord.

Lord.

Yea, noble prince, if that your grace,
 before his honor dye,
 He wil succeed a vertuous king,
 and rule with equitie.

King.

As you have said, my lord, he is
 cheef heire next my grace :
 And if I dye to morrow, next
 he shall succeed my place.

Ambidexter.

And if it please your grace (o king)
 I herd him say,
 For your death unto the God,
 day and night he ded pray :
 He would live so vertuously,
 and get him such a praise,
 That *Fame* by trump his due deserts,
 his honor should up raise.
 He said, your grace deserved had
 the cursing of all men ;
 That ye should never after him
 get any praise agen.

King.

Did he speake thus of my grace,
 in such dispightful wise ?
 Or els doost thou presume to fil
 my princely ears with lies ?

Lord.

I cannot think it in my hart,
 that he would report so.

King.

How sayst thou ? speake the truth,
 was it so or no ?

Ambidexter.

I think so, if it please your grace, but I cannot tel.

King

King.

Thou plaist with bothe hands, now I perceiue wel.
But for to put all doubt aside,
and to make him heere his hope,
He shall dye by deat of sword;
or els by choking rope.
Shall he succeed when I am gone,
to haue more praise than I ?
Were he father, as brother mine,
I swere, that he shall dye.
To pallasce mine I wil therfore,
his death for to pursue.

[*Exit.*

Ambidexter.

Are ye gone ? straight way I wil followe you.
How like ye now, my maisters ? dooth not this geer
eatten ?

The proverbe olde is verified, soon ripe and soon rotten.

He wil not be quiet, til his brother be kild :

His delight is wholly to haue his blood spild.

Mary, sir, I tolde him a notable lye :

If it were to doo again, man, I durst doo it I.

Mary, when I had doon, to it I durst not stand :

Therby you may perceiue I use to play with eche hand.

But how now, cosin *Catpurffe* ? with whome play you ?

Take heed, for his hand is groping even now :

Cosin, take heed, if ye doo secretly grope ;

If ye be taken, cosin, ye must looke through a rope.

[*Exit.*

Enter lord Smirdis alone.

Smirdis.

I am wandring alone, heer and there to walke ;

The court is so unquiet, in it I take no joy :

Solitary to my self now I may talke ;

If I could rule, I wist what to say.

Enter Crueltie and Murder, with bloody bands.

Crueltie.

My coequal partner *Murder*, come away;
From me long thou maist not stay.

Murder.

Yes, from thee I may stay, but not thou from me:
Therefore I have a prerogative aboove thee.

Crueltie.

But in this case we must together abide:
Come, come; lord *Smirdis* I have spide:
Lay hands on him with all festination,
That on him we may woork our indignation.

Smirdis.

How now, my freends? What have you to doo with
me?

Murder.

King *Cambises* hath sent us unto thee,
Commaunding us straightly, with out mercy or favour,
Upon thee to bestow our behaviour;
With *Crueltie* to murder you, and make you away.

[Strike him in divers places.

Smirdis.

Yet pardon me, I hartely you pray:
Consider, the king is a tirant tyrannious;
And all his dooings be damnable and parnitious:
Favour me therefore, I did him never offend.

[A little bladder of vineger prikt.

Crueltie.

No favour at all; your life is at an end.
Even now I strike his body to wound:
Beholde now his blood springs out on the ground.

Murder.

Now he is dead, let us present him to the king.

Crueltie.

Lay to your hand, away him to bring. *[Exeunt.*

Enter.

Enter Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

O the passion of God, yunder is a hevy court :
Some weeps, some wailes, and some make great sport.
Lord *Smirdis* by *Crueltie* and *Murder* is slain ;
But, *Jesus* ! for want of him, how some doo complain !
If I should have had a thousand pound, I could not
forbeare weeping.

Now *Jesus* have his blessed soule in keeping.

Ah, good lord, to think on him, how it dooth me
greeve !

I can not forbeare weeping, ye may me beleewe. [*Weep.*

O, my hart ! how my pulses doo beat

With sorowful lamentations, I am in such a heat.

Ah, my hart ! how for him it dooth sorow !

Nay, I have doon in faith now, and God give you good
morow.

Ha, ha ; weep ! nay, laugh, with both hands to play ;

The king throughe his crueltie hath made him away.

But hath not he wrought a moſte wicked deed ?

Because king after him he should not proceed,

His owne naturall brother, and having no more,

To procure his death by violence ſore ;

In ſpight because his brother should never be king,

His hart beeing wicked consented to this thing.

Now he hath no more brothers, nor kinred alive :

If the king use this geer ſtil, he cannot long thrive.

Enter Hob, and Lob.

Hob.

Gods hat, naibor, come away ; its time to market to
go.

T. 2

Lob.

Lob.

Gods vast, naybor, zay ye zo?
 The clock hath stricken vife ich think by laken :
 Bum vay, vrom sleep cham not very wel waken.
 But, naybor *Hob*, naybor *Hob*, what have ye to zel?

Hob.

Bum troth, naybor *Lob*, to you I chil tel :
 Chave twoo gossings, and a chine of good porke ;
 There is no vatter between this and *Yorks*.
 Chave a pot of strawberyes, and a calves hed,
 A zennight zince to morrow it hath been dead.

Lob.

Chave a score of egges and of butter a pound :
 Yesterday a nest of goodly yung rabbits I vound.
 Chave vorty things mo, of more and of less ;
 My brain is not very good them to expresse.
 But Gods hat, naybor, wotst what?

Hob.

No, not wel ; naybor, whats that?

Lob.

Bum vay, naybor, maister king is a xhrede lad ;
 Zo God help me, and holidam, I think the vool be mad :
 Zome zay, he deale cruelly, his brother he did kil ;
 And also a goodly yung lads hart blood he did spil.

Hob.

Vorhed of God, naibor, has he plaied such a velish
 deed?

Ambidexter.

Goodman *Hob*, and goodman *Lob*, God be your speed :
 As you twoo towards market doo walke,
 Of the kings crueltie I did hear you talke.
 I insure you, he is a king mozte vile and parnitious ;
 His dooings and life are odious and vicious.

Lob.

It were a good deed zome body would breke his hed.

Hob.

Bum vay, naybor *Lob*, I should he were dead.

Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

So would I, *Lob*, and *Hob*, with all my hart.
Now with bothe hands, wil ye see me play my parte?
A, ye whorson, traitorly knaves;
Hob, and *Lob*, out upon you, slaves.

Lob.

And thou calst me knave, thou art an other:
My name is *Lob*, and *Hob* my next naybor.

Ambidexter.

Hob, and *Lob*, a, ye cuntry patches!
A, ye fooles! ye have made wrong matches;
Ye have spoken treason against the kings grace:
For it I will accuse ye before his face;
Then for the same ye shalbe martered:
At the least, ye shall be hangd, drawn and quartered,

Hob.

O, gentleman, ye shall have two pearepyes, and tel
not of me.

Lob.

By God a vat goose chil give thee:
I think no hurt by my vathers soule I sweare.

Hob.

Chave lived wel all my life time my naybers among,
And now should be lothe to come to zuch wrong:
To be hangd and quartered the greef would be great.

Lob.

A foule evil on thee, *Hob*! who bid thee on it treat?
Vor it was thou that first didd him name.

Hob.

Thou lyest like a varlet, and thou calist this same;
It was zuch a voolish *Lob* as thou.

Lob.

Speake many words, and by gods nailes I vow,
Upon thy pate my masse I wil lay.

Ambidexter.

By the masse, I wil curse them to make a fray.
Yea, *Lob*, thou sayest true, all came through him.

Lob.

Bum vay, thou *Hob*, a little would make me ye trim;
Give thee a zawp on thy nose, til thy hart ake.

Hob.

If thou darest, doo it; els, man, cry creke:
I trust, before thou hurt me,
With my staffe chil make a *Lob* of thee.

*[Heer let them fight with their slaves, not
come neer an other by three or foure yardes;
the Vice set them on as hard as he can:
one of their wives come out and all to
beat the Vice, be run away.]*

*Enter Marian-may-be-good, Hobs wife running in with
a broome and parte them.*

Marian.

O, the body of me, husband *Hob*, what meane you to
fight?
For the passion of God, no more blowes smiter
Neighbours, and freends so long, and now to fall out!
What, in your age to seeme so stout?
If I had not parted ye, one had kild another.

Lob.

I had not cared, I swere by Gods mother.

Marian.

Shake hands again at the request of me;
As ye have been freends, so freends stil be.

Hob.

Bum troth, cham content; and zaist woord, neighbor
Lob?

Lob.

I am content; agreed, neighbor *Hob*.

[Shake hands, and laugh hartely one at an other.]

Marian.

So, get you to market, no longer stay;
And with yonder knave let me make a fray.

Hob.

Hob.

Content, wife *Marian*, chil doo as thou dooft say :
But buffe me, ich pray thee, at going away.

[*Exeunt Hob., Lob.*]

Marian.

Thou whorson knave, and prickeard boy,
why didst thou let them fight ?
If one had kild another heer,
couldst thou their deaths requite ?
It beares a signe by this thy deed,
a cowardly knave thou art ;
Els wouldst thou draw that weapon thine,
like a man them to parte.

Ambidexter.

What, *Marian-may-be-good*, are you come prating ?
Ye may hap get a box on the eare with your talking :
If they had kild one another, I had not cared a pease.

[*Heer let her swinge bim in her brome, she
gets bim down, and be her down, thus one
on the top of an other make pastime.*]

Marian.

A, villain, my self on thee I must ease :
Give me a box on the eare ? that wil I try ;
Who shalbe maister, thou shalt see by and by.

Ambidexter.

O, no more, no more, I beseech you hartely ;
Even now I yeeld, and give you the maistry.

[*Run his way out while she is down.*]

Marian.

A, thou knave, dooft thou throw me down, and run
thy way ?
If he were heer again, oh how I would him pay !
I wil after him ; and if I can him meet,
With these my nailes his face I wil greet.

Enter

*Enter Venus leading out her sonne Cupid blinde: he must
have a howe and two shafts, one bedded with golde and
th' other bedded with lead.*

Venus.

Come forth, my sonne, unto my woordes
attentive cares resigne:

What I pretend, see you frequent,
to force this game of mine.

The king a kinswoman hath,
adornd with beautie store;

And I wish that *Dianas* gifts,
they twain shall keep no more;

But use my silver sugred game
their joyes for to augment.

When I doo speake to wound his hart,
Cupid, my sonne, consent;

And shoot at him the shaft of loove,
that beares the bed of golde,

To wound his hart in loovers wise,
his greof for to unfold.

Though kin she be unto his grace,
that nature me expoh,

Against the course thereof he may,
in my game please me wel:

Wherefore, my sonne, doo not forget,
soorthwith pursue the deed.

Cupid.

Mother, I meane for to obey,
as you have whole decreed:

But you must tel me, mother deer,
when I shall arrow draw;

Els your request to be attaind,
will not be worth a straw:

I am blind and cannot see,
but stil do shoot by gesse;

The poets wel in places store
of my might doo expresse.

Venus.

Venus.

Cupid, my sonne, when time shall leave
that thou shalt doo this deed,
Then warning I to thee wil give;
but see, thou shoot with speed.

Lord, Lady, Waiting maid.

Lady.

Lady deer, to king a kin,
soorthwith let us proceed,
To trace abrode the beauty felds,
as erst we had decreed:
The blowing buds whose savery sentts
our sence wil much delighe,
The sweet smel of musk white rose,
to plesse the appetite,
The chirping birds, whose plefant tunes
therin shall hear record,
That our great joy we shall it finde,
in feld to walke a brode,
On lute and cittern there to play
a heavenly hermony,
Our cares shall heare, hart to content,
our sports to beantie.

Lady.

Unto your woods, moste comely lord,
my self submit doo I;
To trace with you in feld, so green,
I meane not to deny.

[*Heer trace up and down pleying;*

Maid.

And I your waiting maid, at hand
with diligence wil be
For to fulfil with hart and hand,
when you shall commaund me.

Enter

Enter King, Lord, and Knight.

King.

Come on, my lord, and, knight, abroad
 our mirth let us imploy :
 Since he is dead, this hart of mine
 in corps I feel it joy.
 Should brother mine have reigned king,
 when I had yeelded breth ?
 A thousand brothers I rather had,
 to put them all to death.
 But oh, beholde where I doo see
 a lord and lady fair ;
 For beauty she moſte worthy is
 to fit in princes chaire

Venus.

Shoot forth, my ſonne ; now is the time
 that thou muſt wound his hart.

Cupid.

Content you, mother, I wil doo my parte.

[Shoot there, and go out Venus and Cupid.]

King.

Of trueth, my lord, in eye of mine.
 all ladyes ſhe dooth excel :
 Can none reporte, what dame ſhe is,
 and to my grace it tel ?

Lord.

Redouted prince, pleaſeth your grace,
 to you ſhee is a kin ;
 Coſin jarmin nigh of birth,
 by mothers ſide come in.

Knight.

And that her waiting maiden is,
 attending her upon :
 He is a lord of princes court,
 and wil be there anon.

They

They sport themselves in pleasant feeld,
to former used use.

King.

My lord, and knight, of trueth I speake,
my hart it cannot chuse;
But with my lady I must speake,
and so expresse my mind.
My lord, and ladyes, walking there,
if you wil favour finde,
Present your selves unto my grace,
and by my side come stand.

First Lord.

We wil fulfil, moſte mightie king,
as your grace doth commaund.

King.

Lady deer, intelligence
my grace hath got of late;
You iſſued out of mothers ſtock,
and kin unto my ſtate:
According to rule of birth you are
coſin jarmin mine;
Yet doo I wiſh, that farther of,
this kindred I could finde:
For *Cupid* he, that eyeleſſe boy,
my hart hath ſo inflamed
With beauty you me to content
the like cannot be named;
For ſince I entred in this place,
and on you fixt mine eyes,
Moſte burning ſits about my hart
in ample wiſe did riſe.
The heat of them ſuch force dooth yeeld,
my corps they ſcorch, alas!
And burnes the ſame with waſting heat,
as *Titan* dooth the graſſe.

And

And sith this heat is kindled so,
 and fresh in hart of me,
 There is no way but of the same,
 the quencher you must be:
 My meaning is, that beauty yours
 my hart with loove dooth wound;
 To give me loove, minde to content
 my hart hath you out found:
 And you are thee must be my wife,
 els shall I end my dayes.
 Consent to this, and be my queen,
 to were the crown with praise.

Lady.

If it please your grace (o mightie king)
 you shall not this request;
 It is a thing that natures course
 dooth utterly detest:
 And high it would the God displease,
 of all that is the wurst;
 To graunt your grace to marry so,
 it is not I that durst:
 Yet humble thanks I render now
 unto you, mightie king,
 That you vouchsafe to great estate,
 so gladly would me bring:
 Were it not it were offence,
 I would it not deny;
 But such great honor to atchive
 my hart I would apply.
 Therefore (o king) with humble hart,
 in this I pardon crave:
 Mine answer is in this request,
 your minde ye may not have.

King.

May I not? nay, then I wil,
 by all the gods I vow:
 And I wil mary the as wife;
 this is mine answer now:

Who

Who dare say nay, what I pretend,
 who dare the same withstand,
 Shall lose his head, and have reported,
 as traitor through my land :
 There is no nay, I will you have,
 and you my queen shall be.

Lady.

Then, mightie king, I crave your grace,
 to hear the words of me :
 Your counsel take of lordings wit,
 the lawes aright peruse ;
 If I with safe may graunt this deed,
 I will it not it refuse.

King.

No, no ; what I have said to you,
 I meane to have it so :
 For counsel theirs I meane not I,
 in this respect to go,
 But to my pallsaice let us go,
 the mariage to prepare ;
 For to avoid my wil in this,
 I can it not forbear.

Lady.

O God, forgive me if I doo amisse ;
 The king by compulsion inforceth me this.

Maid.

Unto the gods for your estate,
 I will not cease to pray ;
 That you may be a happy queen,
 and see moste joyfull day.

King.

Come on, my lords, with gladsome harts
 let us reioice with glee :
 Your musick shewe to joy this deed
 at the request of me.

Both.

For to obey your graces woords
 our honours doo agree.

[*Exeunt.*
Enter

Enter Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

O, the passion of me! mary, as ye say, yonder is a royal court;

There is triumphing, and sport upon sporte:

Such loyall lords, with such lordly exercise,

Frequenting such pastime as they can devise;

Running at tilt, justing, with running at the ring,

Masking and mumming, with eche kinde of thing,

Such dauncing, such singing, with musikal hermony:

Beleeve me, I was lothe to absent their company.

But wil you believe? *Jesu!* what haste they made til they were married?

Not for a milion of pounds one day longer they would have taried.

Oh, there was a banquet royall, and superexcellent;

Thousands and thousands at that banquet was spent.

I muse of nothing but how they can be married so soon;

I care not if I be married before to morowe at noone,

If marriage be a thing that so may be had:

How say you, maid? to mary me wil ye be glad?

Out of dout, I beleeve, it is some excellent treasure,

Els to the same belongs abundant pleasure.

Yet with mine cares I have heard some say,—

That ever I was married! now cursed be the day!

Those be they, that with curst wives be matched,

That husband for haukes meat, of them is up snatched,

Hed broke with a bedstaf, face all to be scratched:

Knave, slave, and villain, a coild cote now and than;

When the wife hath given it, she wil say, alas, good man!

Such were better unmarried, my maisters, I trow,

Then all their life after to be matched with a shrowe.

Enter.

Enter Preparation,

Preparation.

With speed I am sent all things to prepare,
My message to doo as the king did declare.
His grace dooth meane a banquet to make,
Meaning in this place repaste for to take.
Wel the cloth shalbe laid, and all things in redynes,
To court to return, when doon is my busines.

Ambidexter.

A proper man, and also a fit,
For the kings estate to prepare a banquet.

Preparation.

What, *Ambidexter*? thou art not unknowne;
A mischeef on all good faces, so that I curse not mine
own :

Now in the knaves name shake hands with me.

Ambidexter.

Wel said, goodman pouchmouth, your reverence I see;
I wil teach ye, if your manners no better be :
A, ye slave! the king dooth me a gentleman allow;
Therefore I look, that to me ye shall bow. [Fight.]

Preparation.

Good maister *Ambidexter*, pardon my behaviour;
For this your deeds, ye are a knave for your labour.

Ambidexter.

Why, ye stale counterly villain, nothing but knave?
[Fight.]

Preparation.

I am sory, your maistership offended I have :
Shake hands that between us agreement may be ;
I was over shot with my self, I doo see.
Let me have your help, this furniture to provide ;
The king from this place wil not long abide.

Ambidexter.

Ambidexter.

[*Set the fruits on the bord.*

Content; it is the thing that I would wish:
I my self will go fetch on dish.

[*Let the Vice set a dish of nuts, and let them
fall in the bringing of them in.*

Preparation.

Clenly, maister *Ambidexter*; for fair on the ground they
lye.

Ambidexter.

I wil have them up again by and by.

Preparation.

To see all in redynes I wil put you in trust:
There is no nay, to the court needs I must.

[*Exit Preparation.*

Ambidexter.

Have ye no dout, but all shalbe wel?
Mary, sir, as you say, this geer doth excel:
All things is in a redynes, when they come hether,
The kings grace and the queen bothe together.
I beseech ye, my maisters, tel me, is it not best
That I be so bolde as to bid a gest?
He is as honest a man as ever spur'd cow;
My cofin *Cutpurse*, I meane, I beseech ye judge you:
Beleeve me, cofin, if to be the kings gest, ye could be
taken,
I trust, that offer would not be forsaken.
But, cofin, because, to that office ye are not like to come,
Frequent your exercises, a horne on your thumb,
A quick eye, a sharp knife, at hand a receiver:
But then take heed, cofin, ye be a clenly convayer;
Content your self, cofin, for this banquet you are unfit;
When such as I at the same am not worthy to sit.

Enter

Enter King, Queen, Lords, &c.

King.

My queen, and lords, to take repast
let us attempt the same;
Heer is the place, delay no time,
but to our purpose frame.

Queen.

With willing harts your whole behest
we minde for to obey.

All.

And we, the rest of princes train,
will doo as you doo say. *[Sit at the banquet.]*

King.

Me think, mine eares dooth with the sound
of musicks hermony;
Heer for to play before my grace,
in place I would them spy.

[Play at the banquet.]

Ambidexter.

They be at hand, fir, with fiddle and fiddle;
They can play a new daunce called, *Hey, diddle, diddle.*

King.

My queen, parpend, what I pronounce
I wil not violate;
But one thing which my hart makes glad,
I minde to explicate:
You knowe, in court up trained is
a lyon very yung,
Of on litter two whelps beside,
as yet not very strong;
I did request, one whelp to see
and this yung lyon fight:
But lyon did the whelp convince
by strength of force and might;

His brother whelp, perceiving that
 the lion was to good,
 And he by force was like to see
 the other whelp his blood,
 With force to lion he did run
 his brother for to help :
 A wonder great it was to see
 that freendship in a whelp.
 So then the whelpes between them both
 the lion did convince ;
 Which thing to see before mine eyes
 did glad the hart of princee.

[At this tale tolds let the Queene weep.]

Queene.

These woords to hear makes stilling teares
 issue from christal eyes.

King.

What doost thou meane, my spouse, to weep
 for losse of any prise ?

Queen.

No, no, (o king) but as you see
 freendship in brothers whelp,
 When one was like to have repulse,
 the other yeelded help.
 And was this favour showd in dogs,
 to shame of royall king ?
 Alack, I with these eares of mine
 had not once heard this thing.
 Even so should you (o mightie king)
 to brother been a stay ;
 And not without offence to you,
 in such wise him to slay.
 In all assayes it was your parte,
 his cause to have defended ;
 And who so ever had him misused,
 to have them reprehended :

But

But faithful loove was more in dog,
then it was in your grace.

King.

O cursed caitive, vicious and vile,
I hate thee in this place.

This banquet is at an end,
take all these things away :

Before my face thou shalt repent
the words that thou doost say.

O wretch moste vile, didst thou the cause
of brother mine so tender ?

The losse of him should greeve thy hart,
he beeing none offender.

It did me good his death to have,
so wil it to have thine ;

What freendship he had at my hands,
the same even thou shalt finde.

I give consent, and make a vow,
that thou shalt dye the death ;

By *Cruels* sword, and *Murder*-fel,
even thou shalt lose the breth.

Ambidexter, see with speed
to *Crueltie* ye go ;

Cause him hether to approch,
Murder with him also.

Ambidexter.

I redy am for to fulfil,
if that it be your graces wil.

King.

Then nought oblight my message given,
absent thy self away.

Ambidexter.

Then in this place I wil no longer stay.
If that I durst, I would mourne your case ;
But, alas ! I dare not for feare of his grace.

[*Exit* Ambidexter.]

King.

Thou cursed jil, by all the gods
 I take an othe and swere,
 That flesh of thine these hands of mine
 in peeces small could tere;
 But thou shalt dye by dent of sword,
 there is no freend ne foe
 Shall finde remorce at princes hand,
 to save the life of thee.

Queene.

Oh, mightie king and husband mine,
 vouchsafe to heere me speke,
 And licence give to spouse of thine,
 her patient minde to breake:
 For tender loove unto your grace
 my words I did so frame,
 For pure loove dooth hurt of king
 me violate and blame.
 And to your grace is this offence,
 that I should purchase death?
 Then cursed time that I was quene,
 to shorten this my breth:
 Your grace doth know by marriage true,
 I am your wife and spouse,
 And one to save an others helth
 (at troth plight) made our vows.
 Therefore, o king, let looving quene,
 at thy hand finde remorse,
 Let pitie be a meane to quench
 that cruel raging force:
 And pardon plight from princes mouth,
 yeeld grace unto your quene,
 That amitie with faithful zeal
 may ever be us between.

King.

King.

A, caitive vile, to pitie thee,
 my hart it is not bent;
 Ne yet to pardon your offence,
 it is not mine intent.

First Lord.

Our mightie prince, with humble sute
 of your grace this I crave,
 That this request it may take place,
 your favour for to have.
 Let mercy yet abundantly
 the life of, queen preserve,
 Sith shee in moste obedient wife,
 your graces wil dooth serve.
 As yet your grace but while with her
 hath had cohabitation;
 And sure this is no desert why,
 to yeeld her indignation.
 Therefore (o king) her life prolong,
 to joy her days in blisse.

Second Lord.

Your grace shall win immortall fame
 in graunting unto this;
 She is a queene whose goodly hue
 excelles the royall rose:
 For beautie bright dame nature she
 a large gift did dispose;
 For comelynes who may compare?
 of all she bares the bel;
 This should give cause to moove your grace
 to loove her very wel;
 Her silver brest in those your armes
 to sing the songs of loove;
 Fine qualities moste excellent
 to be in her you proove;

A precious pearle of prife to prince,
 a jewel passing all :
 Therefore (o king) to beg remorse
 on bothe my knees I fall ;
 To graunt her grace to have her life
 with hart I doo desire.

King.

You villaines twain, with raging force
 ye fet my hart on fire :
 If I consent, that she shall dye,
 how dare ye crave her life ?
 You two to aske this at my hand
 dooth much enlarge my strife ;
 Were it not for shame you two should dye
 that for her life doo sue :
 But favour mine from you is gone,
 my lords, I tel you true.
 I sent for *Crueltie* of late ;
 if he would come away,
 I would commit her to his hands
 his cruel parte to play.
 Even now I see where he dooth come,
 it dooth my hart delight.

Enter Crueltie, and Murder,

Crueltie.

Come, *Murder*, come ; let us go forth with might ;
 Once again the kings commaundement we must fulfil.

Murder.

I am contented to doo it with a good wil.

King.

Murder, and *Crueltie*, for bothe of you I sent,
 With all festination your offices to frequent :
 Lay holde on the queen, take her to your power,
 And make her away with in this houre ;

Spare

Spare for no feare, I doo you ful permit :
So I from this place doo meane for to flit.

Bothe.

With couragious harts (o king) we wil obey.

King.

Then come, my lords, let us departe away.

Bothe the Lords.

With hevy harts we wil doo all your grace dooth say.

[Exeunt King, and Lords.]

Crueltie.

Come, lady and queen, now are you in our handling :
In faith, with you we wil use no dandling.

Murder.

With all expedition, I, *Murder*, wil take place,
Though thou be a queene, ye be under my grace.

Queene.

With patience I wil you bothe obey.

Crueltie.

No more woords, but go with us away.

Queen.

Yet, before I dye, some psalme to God let me sing.

Bothe.

We be content to permit you that thing.

Queen.

Farewel, you ladyes of the court,
with all your masking hew :
I doo forsake these broderd gardes,
and all the facions new,
The court and all the courtly train,
wherin I had delight ;
I banished am from happy sporte,
and all by spightful spight.
Yet with a joyful hart to God
a psalme I meane to sing,
Forgiving all, and the king,
of eche kind of thing.

[Sing and Exeunt.]

Enter

Enter Ambidexter, weeping.

Ambidexter.

A, a, a, a; I cannot chuse but weep for the queene:
 Nothing but mourning now at the court there is seene.
 Oh, oh, my hart, my hart; oh, my bum wil break:
 Very greef so torments me that scarce I can speake.
 Who could but weep for the losse of such a lady?
 That can not I doo, I sweare by mine honesty.
 But, lord! so the ladyes mourn crying, alack!
 Nothing is worne now but onely black;
 I believe, all cloth in *Watling street* to make gownes would
 not serve:

If I make a lye the devil let ye serve:
 All ladyes mourne bothe yung and olde;
 There is not one that weareth a points worth of gold.
 There is a sorte for feare for the king doo pray,
 That would have him dead, by the masse I dare say.
 What a king was he that hath used such tyranny?
 He was a kin to bishop *Bonner*, I think verily;
 For bothe their delights was to shed blood,
 But never intended to doo any good.
Cambises put a judge to death, that was a good deed;
 But to kil the yung childe was worse to proceed;
 To murder his brother, and then his owne wife!
 So help me God, and holidam, it is pitie of his life.
 Heare ye? I wil lay twentie thousand pound,
 That the king him self dooth dye by some wound;
 He hath shed so much blood, that his wil be shed:
 If it come so to passe, in faith then he is sped.

Enter

Enter the King without a gown, a sword thrust up into his side bleeding.

King.

Out alas ! what shall I doo ? my life is finished ;
Wounded I am by sudain chaunce, my blood is minished :
Gogs hart, what meanes might I make my life to pre-
serve ?

Is there nought to be my help ? nor is there nought to
serve ?

Out upon the court, and lords that there remain !
To help my greef in this my case, wil none of them take
pain ?

Who but I in such a wife his deaths wound could have
got ?

As I on horse back up did leepe, my swoord from scabard
shot,

And ran me thus into the side, as you right wel may see.
A mervels chaunce, unfortunate, that in this wise should
be.

I feele my self a dying now, of life bereft am I ;
And death hath caught me with his dart, for want of
blood I spy.

Thus gasping heer on ground I lye, for nothing I doo
care ;

A just reward for my misdeeds my death dooth plain
declare.

*[Here let him quake and stir,
Ambidexter.]*

Now now, noble king ? pluck up your hart ;
What, wil you die, and from us departe ?

Speeke to me, and you be alive :

He cannot speake ; but beholde, how with death he dooth
strive.

Alas,

Alas, good king ! alas, he is gone !
 The devil take me, if for him I make any mone.
 I did prognosticate of his end, by the masse ;
 Like as I did say, so is it come to passe.
 I wil be gone ; if I should be found bear,
 That I should kil him, it would appeer :
 For feare with his death they doo me charge,
 Farewel, my maisters, I wil go take barge ;
 I meane to be packing now is the tide :
 Farewel, my maisters ; I wil no longer abide.
[Exit Ambidexter.]

Enter three Lords.

First Lord.

Behold, my lords, it is even so
 as he to us did tel ;
 His grace is dead upon the ground,
 by dent of swoord moste fel.

Second Lord.

As he in saddle would have lept,
 his sword from sheath did go,
 Goring him up into the side ;
 his life was ended so.

Third Lord.

His blood so fast did issue out,
 that nought could him prolong :
 Yet before he yeelded up the ghost,
 his hart was very strong.

First Lord

A iust rewarde for his misdeeds
 the God abooove hath wrought ;
 For certainly the life he led
 was to be counted nought.

Second

Second Lord.

Yet a princely buriall he shall have,
according his estate;
And more of him heer at his time,
we have not to dilate.

Third Lord.

My lords, let us take him up,
to cary him away.

Both.

Content we are with one accord,
to doo as you doo say.

[*Exeunt All.*]



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E P I L O G U S.

RIGHT gentle audience, heere have you perused.
The tragicall history of this wicked king;
According to our duety, we have not refused,
But to our best intent exprest every thing:
We trust, none is offended for this, our dooing.
Our author craves likewise, if he have squared amisse,
By gentle admonicion to knowe where the fault is.

His good wil shall not be neglected to amende the same;
Praying all to beare therfore with his simple deed,
Until the time serve a better he may frame:
Thus yeelding you thanks, to end we decreed
That you so gently have suffred us to proceed,
In such patient wise as to hear and see:
We can but thank ye therfore, we can doo no more we.

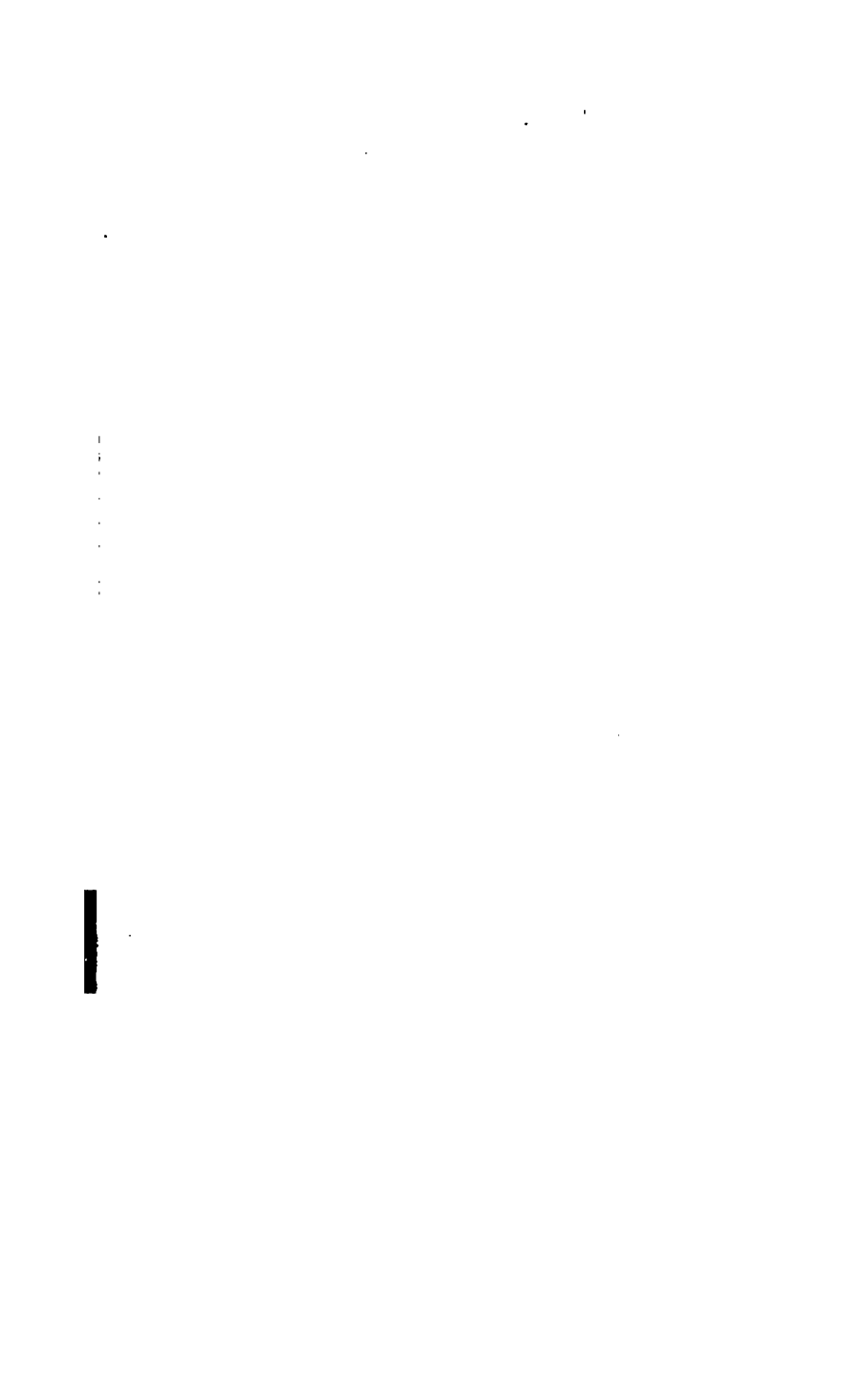
As duty bindes us, for our noble queene let us pray,
And for her honorable counsell, the trueth that they
may use,
To practise justice, and defend her grace eche day;
To maintain Gods woord they may not refuse,
To correct all those, that would her grace and graces
lawes abuse;
Beseeching God over us she may reign long,
To be guided by trueth, and defended from wrong.

Amen q. Thomas Preston.

Imprinted at *London* by *John Alldes*.













SPART.

Under no circumstances
taken from the Building



